

/4 cont./

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m At the present time the family concept of the woman is changing because of the contact of mestizo and even pure Indian women brought about by changes in their economic situation and by contact with whites. Gradually, the traditional organization of the marriage payment and fidelity based on the payment is being broken down, because it is the women themselves and not their relatives who receive the payment, and for their activities as prostitutes. The phenomenon is noted not only in the centers of the interior which have contacts with whites and Negroes -- principally traders and civil authorities -- but also and especially in Maracalibo and some of the towns of the department of Magdalena, to which they have been obliged to emigrate. However, they maintain the family concept of mutual assistance and share their income with their close relatives, not as before in the form of the marriage payment but as income earned in the sex market.

843 Prenatal care and birth. A woman learns that she is pregnant when she feels a loss of appetite and repugnance for food. The later disappearance of the menstrual period confirms the suspicion, and she immediately sees to it that her husband is informed of the event, so that he may know of his coming fatherhood. Also, in the case where she has had extramarital relations in the absence of the husband, the woman, when she feels these early symptoms of pregnancy, goes in search of him, cohabits with him, and later can tell him of her condition, thus avoiding possible later suspicions. From the time of the ending of the first menstrual period, she begins to count the months, and she expects delivery after the eighth month.

837 Before the arrival of a child, the woman complies with established rules intended to avoid a lengthy and difficult delivery as well as to safeguard the new arrival from sickness which would affect his normal mental and physical well-being. Included in these prescriptions are to be found some of useful and practical value and others with a marked magic aspect. These magic observances generally affect both parents, although some only refer to the woman, /5/ others exclusively to the man (1).

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862 In this way the replacement is gradual without organic or other complications for the child. c) When breast feeding is kept on overlong and the child is already eating normally and assimilating adult food, the breast is then simply a diversion that is, at times, voluntarily abandoned by the child. In this category may be included the younger children, or sharē, who considerably prolong the period of breast feeding. d) Very exceptionally it may happen that the mother gets annoyed with her child for biting her nipple and as punishment takes it away, but this punishment occurs only when the child is big, as logically, when the child is small, he cannot so bite.

When the mother is not able to travel, in order to deprive the child she wants to wean, or when it will not take a refusal, [42] she lets her nipple with the true juice of a plant called wawā and offers her breast to the child, who /13/ on tasting it cries and rejects it. This practice is repeated several times until the child refuses to respond when the breast is offered. This step is taken when the child is two or three years old and it is considered shameful to continue breast feeding so long, or when the child is small and special circumstances oblige the mother to act in this way.

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17] When the child learns to take other food as a substitute for his mother's milk, she feeds him liquids from a vessel made from a gourd /tumma/ (1) which she holds, at the same time

1. At present, some use nursing bottles.

training him to hold it also so that he can learn to feed himself; she gives him soup from a spoon, and she puts solid food into his hand. When he is very small she gives him lukewarm food, but later she gives it to him at the temperature it comes from the hearth, warning him to be careful. At two years the child is self-sufficient in these matters.

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566 Bond service. Bond service is different from slavery in that it is not the result of a conquest in war of one group by another, but rather the consequence of economic decline, since when a group cannot support its members, they sell them. Years ago large numbers were sold to Venezuela as farm hands to the Caribbean Islands, etc., and although the investment was never very safe, due to the escaping of the Indians, the sales were numerous, and even today they are very frequent. Furthermore, it is common practice at the present time in the Jarara region, short of resources in summer, to take the nephews and nieces of an individual who has been forced by necessity to commit robbery as bond servants to repay by their own labor what was stolen.

Women in this situation, separated from their group and unable to be helped by them, are coveted by the men. Those who are sent away, on their return, find themselves in a situation similar to that of slaves who have come back. They settle in the cities and turn to prostitution, as the whites find in them a simple solution of their problems, and they find a means of subsistence.

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177 The mestizo. Cross breeding /mestizaje/ has not affected Guajiro culture in respect to the tradition regarding magic, language, organization, etc., but has had an effect on social morality, which /75/ is readily forsaken by the mestizo woman of lower class, commonly called cabeza loca ("madcap"), by the general run of Indians, owing to her sexual promiscuity, her easily becoming a prostitute and giving herself and living for certain periods of time with a man, (mestizo or white as a general rule) to leave him later to follow an endless chain. The pure-blooded Guajiro woman, even if she takes to prostitution, never abandons, from any motive, the established norms of modesty, such as never to show herself naked, never to behave rowdily, etc., as there is no greater insult than that a man should affirm such things about her. The mestizo woman, however, does not respect these concepts. For this reason she is sought after more and more, and she freely and openly throws over the traditional

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177 limitations. We have said that this applies to the lower classes because the mestizo woman of the upper-class groups are as modest and conservative, or more so, than the pure Indians. The mestizo woman of lower class is not under the control of her maternal relatives, and for this reason there is no repressive power capable of making her submit to that which is right.

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167 Geographic conditions. A natural phenomenon is basically the cause of prostitution in La Guajira: the long summers /dry season/ that the peninsula has suffered during the past five years, a period in which the winter seasons /rainy season/ have been nonexistent, so that neither stock breeding nor agriculture have been able to subsist and have dwindled to a minimum, so ruining the traditional economy of the population. The result is that the native, seeing himself without resources to live, migrates or succumbs through inanition, as we were able to observe during our stay in that region. In this state of affairs the native will go to Venezuela where he finds paid work which alleviates his situation and that of his relatives in the peninsula. Sometimes the women also migrate with their families.

When the men emigrate, the family groups lose their elements of support in difficult situations, and the women and children are left with diminished protection and control, that is to say, they depend on themselves. When the assistance from the men is limited, the families must live by any means they can, and they then feel the attraction of the /urban/ centers where they expect to be able to find the solution to their problem of making a living. They migrate, and their only opportunity is in prostitution. There the women begin a way of life foreign to their social organization, made easier by the absence of male relatives who would put a stop to that way of life, since by being absent they cannot present their claims for compensation payment, and, furthermore, they are, generally, unaware of this state of affairs. The married woman whose husband is absent over long periods, impelled by this same situation and her own sexual need, turns to prostitution without anyone /76/ to make the corresponding claim. Married

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[77] Consequences. The consequences that prostitution has brought to Guajiro society are various. The first and decisive one is the almost absolute wreck of the social organization due to the destruction of marriage, the mainstay of social life based on the purchase of a woman, who by this transaction becomes the private property of the man in the matrimonial sense. If she is unfaithful there arise the claim for compensation payment and the whole series of consequences which we have seen previously, all tending to preserve conjugal fidelity. On the woman's turning to prostitution, the legal norms which establish that marriage payment and the very constitution of the family become useless as it erases the essential character of the family: i.e., procreation. There is an end to the principle of the establishment of new social cells and fecundation takes second place. It is the biological satisfaction that is sought, not the procreation of children, a phenomenon which constitutes a grave social problem for, although many people accept contraceptives, others through ignorance or thoughtlessness on the part of the man do not use them, and the natural consequences of pregnancy are not long delayed. Then they have recourse to all the abortives they know of empirically, using the herbs whose active qualities are claimed by the old women of the Sierra de Macuira, or those they have traditionally learned from their ancestors, or they ask the assistance of a woman practiced in these matters, who for a fee provokes the abortion by traumatic massage on the abdomen of the pregnant woman and keeps the secret.

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[25] Besides abortives, the Guajiro woman uses potions of herbs which sterilize her for a time, up to three years, without stopping menstruation, and others which interrupt the menstrual cycle for long periods with the result that her sexual relations do not lead to pregnancy. She even appeals to magic to get this result, for example, by drinking, while fasting, a potion made from mule's excrement left to soak overnight and then decanted. They believe that as this animal is sterile so will the woman who imbibes the preparation.

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Furthermore, doing away with marriage by payment destroys with it the family backing which, in the economic sense, means as much to the woman, the man, and the children as to the maternal relatives through the system of payments, repayment, and compensations that are consequent on it. Above all, the woman loses the social and economic backing of her group, and the man the guarantee of her fidelity.

The woman who has migrated and has taken to this way of life while outside her native land, or who has accepted it in her own homeland, usually will not return to the country, or if she does it is only to live there while she spends the money she has earned, to return later and resume her trade. Today prostitution is a menace to all La Guajira. Young Indians who have not been able to obtain a wife or simply anyone who wants sexual satisfaction will find it with a Guajiro woman by means of a casual payment, and with prostitution has come a new scourge for the Guajiro: venereal diseases, brought and spread by those who have acquired it in their relations with the civilizados. Ignorance on the part of the prostitute of hygienic precepts which would free her from these ills has resulted in the disease increasing dangerously.

Moreover, there exists in the peninsula no clinic where the native can go for treatment, and there is only one doctor and a poorly equipped hospital in Uribia. Hence, prostitution has aided, and still aids, not only social bankruptcy by the wreck of the institution of the family but also physical degeneration by the unrestricted spreading of venereal diseases among the youth of the country.

Outfit and dowry of the woman. When a Guajiro woman is bought the family gives her the inheritance, in livestock, which is hers by right. These gifts go to her in accordance with her social standing and with the amount of the marriage payment, because this establishes the prestige of the maternal relatives. They know that a man who has paid dearly for his wife expects that she has not cost so much just for the sake of the marital satisfactions she may give him, or for her known high social status, but that in her price there will be included an inheritance handed over to the bride for life and at this time. He could not

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583 thread or spinning and dyeing cotton. They bring in logs, which serve as seats, they make the harness for the horses and harness. In other words, in some places the woman tries to become self-sufficient, and in other places, according to the established division of labor, she sells whatever she makes and with the proceeds buys the food, clothes, and utensils she may need in the home; or more simply she relies on her husband to gain her object.

583 The problem is different in the case of mestizaje, if the marriage is not carried out under Guajiro law, and in that of whites who have married Guajiro women in accordance with the rites established for the community. In both cases the man provides, besides the house, all that is essential for the home such as furniture and domestic utensils according to the custom of civilization /normative/, and later, as they wear out, he substitutes new ones. With respect to the dowry, we may say that the man may take charge of his wife's animals, if she so wishes, but he may not arbitrarily dispose /81/ of them. The capital acquired between them is the inheritance of their children, as we have seen. It does not devolve, as in Guajiro practice, to its original source (the wife's maternal relatives). Since he did not make a marriage payment, it is up to the man to shoulder the responsibility and provide for all the necessities of the home.

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V

MARRIAGE

583 Purchase procedure. The traditional Guajiro marriage is brought into being through the purchase of the woman from her maternal relatives, payment being made in animals and ornaments and, at the present time, in bolivars because of the influence of trade with Venezuela.

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583 satisfies the girl's parents, who, attracted by the economic possi-
582 bilities of their future son-in-law, arrange the marriage without consulting the wishes of the impuberal child, although they sometimes try to persuade her, making her see the advantageous situation such a marriage may ensure. The girl in many cases has a child before her first menstruation appears.

It is said in La Guajira that old men practice this custom because they derive more sexual incentive from young and undeveloped feminine figures, and this prolongs their masculine potency.

583 Marriage of Guajiro women with civilizados. With very few
177 exceptions intermarriage is carried out between Indians and civilizados /nonnatives/. It is of two kinds, temporary and permanent, in accordance with the length of stay of the civilizado man in the peninsula and is nearly always limited to the Guajiro law of marriage by purchase of the woman.

The temporary marriages consist of unions established between traders or civil or military authorities who must stay some time in the peninsula, having come alone and finding in the purchase of a native woman the solution of their personal problems. They live with the woman they have bought, adapting themselves to the norms of life in La Guajira, and have children who, according to legal tradition, do not belong to them. As their obligation to their family is so limited and the maternal relatives have continued to give backing to the woman, they can go away at any moment, as indeed they do, without altering the life of the home that they founded, because the woman has not been uprooted, as in the case of a Catholic marriage, from her social institutions nor her relatives, who, once the marriage is dissolved /92/ by the definite absence of the white element, take her back again into their midst. The woman continues to sustain the family and bring it up under the protection and counsel of her maternal relatives, since very frequently nothing is ever again heard of the father. Sometimes they marry again or live with another man.

Permanent marriages are effected with civilizado men who, having definitely settled in the country, sometimes decide to get

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● married in the Catholic church or to buy a woman (usually one with standing) and found a home, which in the first case shows signs of the predominance of the father's culture and in the second is much nearer the customs and usages of the mother, by whom it is much more directly influenced due to the form of marriage. The children conceived /in the marriage/ are legally recognized in the case of the Catholic marriage and very frequently are sent to the interior of the country to be educated. In the case of the Guajiro form of marriage, the children belong to the mother and her consanguineous relatives, whose surname they take.

Temporary marriages may be due to the fact that the women belong to a group of low status and are sold by their parents because they are in a desperate economic situation. For this reason it is not unusual for a white man to have several wives, as many as he can buy and support. We know that the woman who has been bought must furnish the home, but this is not the custom when she marries a white man, for in spite of the payment the civilizado man must make himself responsible for the proper maintenance of his wife and children in shelter, food, and clothes.

These material advantages make it possible and frequent for one to find young Guajiro women married to decrepit old men who can give them a comparatively comfortable home, which they share with their relatives, who find a solution for their economic difficulties in unions of this kind.

The problem of these marriages lies in the fact that the woman consents only because of hunger, and when the opportunity presents itself for her to give way to her affection for someone else or to satisfy her instincts, she easily abandons her civilizado husband and runs away with her lover, far away from any action her husband may try to take, whose claims are usually ignored by her consanguineous relatives, to whom he has made the marriage payment, because they know that the white man has neither a powerful group nor the Colombian law to back him. Once the civilizado leaves La Guajira, the runaway pair legitimize their union, contracting marriage through a payment which the man can make anew to the girl's parents.

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Permanent marriages take place generally between women of standing and whites of recognized influence, and they are more stable. The conduct of the woman and her relatives is in accord with the rank of her husband, and he on his part maintains toward his wife a certain courtesy and gives her the good treatment she deserves as a person of high status. In these cases it is not unusual that the woman has been bought in accord with Guajiro legal tradition and that the marriage lasts; but frequently it is ratified later in the Catholic church, or both forms were used from the first moment.

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It is possible, also, that the white man, following Guajiro custom and in spite of his Catholic marriage, has other wives of lower status than the first, who always keeps the rank of legitimate wife in our sense and on whom depends the social representation of the children, the only heirs of the father and of the home, legal center of the family. The other women, although bought according to Guajiro law, acquire more or less the rank of concubines in our culture, and their children, the position of illegitimate ones. Catholic missionary influence and relations with whites have made the Indian come to regard his form of marriage as a little immoral. For this reason they now say when speaking of a Guajiro woman married with the rites of their culture: "She is So-and-so's woman," and the woman who has been married by Catholic rite says: "I am So-and-so's wife." Thus when one asks a Guajiro woman, for example, "Where is your husband?", one must be careful to use the right word for husband /marido/ or spouse /esposo/, using the first word in the case of a marriage according to peninsula rites and the second in the case of a Catholic marriage, the word "marido" being considered offensive when improperly used. As a consequence of this fact, the concept of legitimate and illegitimate children has sprung up, a concept which has no place in primitive Guajiro law. A child even though born as the result of illicit relations is a child without adjectives, either of scorn or contempt. In such cases the mother has received by force through her relatives the payment for her abuse and the

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- 177 birth in such a way that they are never placed outside the pale of
945 the law. This may be due to the uterine line of kinship in which
948 the father does not count in the recognition of children.

[583] In these cases of marriage between whites and Guajiro women there also occurs a union of these two ideas. The white man refuses to buy the woman or legitimize their union through the necessary traditional proceedings demanded by her culture. The refusal to comply with the main traditional requisite makes the man unacceptable, and he is considered an intruder.

The children, illegitimate /94/ according to the paternal mentality, meet a natural reluctance among their mother's relatives, who however in the long run have to accept them.

- 582 Consanguineous marriage. Although the Guajiro community is in an obvious process of disintegration, there is a characteristic which is strongly maintained: exogamy, which, at the present time, does not mean the prohibition of marriage within the same clan group, but within a limited circle of close consanguineous kin: brothers /and sisters, hermanos/, uncles /and aunts, tios/, and ascendants in the female line. Thus today in La Guajira we find marriages between individuals of the same clan, since the tie has weakened so much that although they belong to the same clan group, they do not consider themselves relatives.

If the marriage takes place within the small family circle, the opinion of society and of the relatives is never favorable. They cannot explain why nor wish to accept that an individual should marry a consanguineal kin included among those just mentioned. Their magical beliefs reinforce this, because these beliefs establish the prohibition that a man must not marry a relative, or he will become bald.

- 582 Guajiro mentality cannot accept as natural the marriage of
598 a woman to her maternal uncle. This would be incest at its worst, because the maternal uncle has the position that a father has with us. There was a case, and a similar attitude has always been observed in like cases, of a Guajiro girl who had sexual relations with her maternal uncle. After pregnancy became

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583 which legally belonged to her consanguineous relatives. With this refusal to pay, he has destroyed the standing of the woman, since it is the size of the payment which fixes this, and this denominator of her family now does not exist. This lowers her consanguineous relatives, the bitterest insult to the Indian, for whom the conservation of prestige, its strengthening and increase, is a permanent concern and a rule of life. It puts them in the position of a weak group in which their daughter has been abducted without having received the corresponding payment. They await a similar situation for the descendants of the couple since they, with only the backing of their father and mother, must face all hazards that present themselves, without counting on the economic and social help of their relatives.

[595] Furthermore, although the man may marry in the Catholic church, this does not mean for the woman that her husband is going to be monogamous, because he will live as suits him best, buying all the other wives he wants according to the peninsula system, without taking into account that the first marriage prohibits him from having other women.

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177 Catholic marriage, which presents itself as one of the best ways to achieve the acculturation of the Indians, his passage to civilization, and his definitive incorporation into Colombian life is now beginning to be gradually accepted and in this way is breaking down the old matrilineal clan organization. It contains various outstanding facts which radically transform the traditional customs. We shall see some of these:

a) The preparation of the home, which in the traditional Guajiro marriage is the woman's responsibility, in the Catholic marriage is entirely the man's, even to the house itself. We know that the payment which the man gives for his wife is made so that the wife and her maternal relatives can take over these /domestic/ obligations. There being no such payment in many Catholic marriages, the man must necessarily, and in fact does, build his own house as soon as possible and must have it adequately furnished with all the household goods necessary for domestic life.

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177 b) The responsibility for the support of the home also falls to the man, not only in regard to food for himself, his wife, and the children, but also for clothing for them all.

● c) The Guajiro marriage, as the base of all social organization, necessarily holds sway over inheritance laws. If a couple marry in the Catholic church, they break with this law, and Colombian law is substituted for the laws of the peninsula which no longer cover them. In this way, on the death of the father, his goods are not inherited by his maternal nephews, but rather, in accordance with the Colombian law in force, by his wife and children, obligatory heirs. The custom of gifts to the sons from the father during his lifetime may go on, but these never constitute the whole of the inheritance.

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423 d) Traditional Guajiro organization in respect to land makes of it communal property divided among the various family groups, who are permitted use and usufruct, but with alienation expressly forbidden. These rights to settle, to cultivate arable land, to pasture, to use the sources of water supply, to take advantage of the products of the woods, etc., are all denied to the couple who have married in accordance with the Catholic church.

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177 e) There are also appreciable changes in residence of the newly married pair, which will be seen in the paragraph about it in this chapter.

f) Catholic marriage, as is known, gives primacy among us to the transmission of the father's surname, but a marriage consecrated with the Guajiro rite does not, since in this case the children belong to the mother, are of her blood, and use her name exclusively. This fact shows clearly how, by accepting the Catholic bond, the woman isolates her children from the group to which she belonged, because from then onward they do not bear her name, the expression of her family affiliation, and for this reason her maternal relatives do not have to give them economic aid or social backing when they need it. On their part, the maternal relatives of the father have difficulty accepting the children of one of their menfolk as their children in place of their

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177 nephews and nieces, and the fact that they bear their surname when they are children of a union with a woman of a different family group is hard for them to take. In a certain way, the children, although nominally belonging to the father, find themselves in an abnormal situation among their paternal relatives and have a feeling of being rejected, and among their maternal relatives they find a similar attitude and hurt feelings because they have been separated violently from them by their mother's /98/ Catholic marriage, which has completely broken the traditional blood relationship, giving them another surname.

g) If Guajiro custom gives the woman the right to give her name to her children, Catholic marriage transfers this right to the man. She generally gives the child the name of an ancestor, a brother /or sister/ or an uncle /or aunt/; and the man, having been conceded this right, does likewise. If the marriage is Catholic, the children are also baptized. This does not mean that children born to a typical couple married by Guajiro rites are not also baptized, but this is rarer.

h) With the breaking of the consanguineous bonds which bind the child to his maternal relatives, his education is influenced more directly by the father, since he definitely respects his wishes and consults him, the father, in this way, taking the place of the mother's brothers, who in the traditional marriage assume these responsibilities. The children respect and obey their father, and the duality of authority which one observes in the Guajiro home is not felt here because the man, from the first moment, establishes the predominance of his will over his wife and children. In this way, the sons identify with their progenitor and defend him because he is their real father and not somebody who has no consanguineous tie and no interests in common with them.

The fact that the father assumes the responsibility for the actions of his sons does not mean that, as in the case of a Guajiro marriage, the mother then obtains the right to claim compensation payment from her husband for anything that may happen to them in any circumstance, or vice versa, but that both assume the total responsibility, without giving rise to any compensation claims

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583 from one or the other when the blame for any particular act falls
177 directly on one of the parents. Each one is free to punish the
children, without asking the approval of the other; neither feels
inhibited about giving an order, nor is it necessary to consult
the relatives of either before making a decision. In this way,
authority makes itself felt in the home, is more closely linked
with the parents, less liable to interference from consanguineous
relatives, and less limited, making the education of the children
easier for this reason and ensuring a unity of authority in the
home.

Marriage through sexual relations between the unmarried.

636 Sexual relations before marriage are strictly forbidden in the
583 Guajiro community except during the celebration of the Dance
of the Kid (ceremony of propitiation of the rain and the harvest)
when it is permitted without /99/ entailing social punishment
for those guilty. When times are normal a compensation claim
for abuse or usufruct is presented, or a mutual pact made for
marriage, legalizing in this way the antisocial act committed.
The varieties that may appear in this regard are the following:

583 For abduction, which may have two aspects, sham abduction
and real abduction.

Sham abduction is looked upon with favor by the woman's
maternal relatives, who, knowing about the affectionate relations
between her and an individual belonging to an important family
group with whom it would be very convenient to be linked by
marriage even without an offer for her hand or the stipulation
of payment, let the girl go with her lover without offering any
opposition. After a time they present their compensation claim,
and the man sends his relatives who are acting as his sponsors
/padrinas familiares/ to make an arrangement with the woman's
maternal relatives. They then come to a reasonable agreement,
and the man hurries to pay the price arranged. This proceeding
is carried through peacefully, always counting on the good faith
and acquiescence of the two families, although it does have the
appearance of an abduction.

MATERNITY

844 Care of the mother at childbirth. The responsibility for the life and well-being of the children is shared by the father and the mother, but it falls directly on the mother when the father is absent from home during her pregnancy or delivery; she must give him a full account of his children, since otherwise he will put in a claim against her for any supposed neglect, making her pay for the death of the child. This is why the woman during the delivery of her child submits to all the customary prescriptions covering these cases and seeks the help of her relatives and their backing, because the responsibility in the last instance will fall on them, since it is they who must pay the corresponding indemnity.

The first child is born in the maternal home. If the mother is not already there, the husband should take her to her maternal home before the event, with the careful attention necessary so that no ill-effects are caused by her traveling. At the moment of delivery she is preferably attended by her mother, or if she is not available, by her eldest aunt or by the most important and knowledgeable aunt in preference to the others, should the first be unavailable. The grandmother may also assist if she is still capable. In the absence of the relatives just mentioned, the sisters are asked to help. The married ones are preferred to the unmarried, but in the event of special urgency one of these will be called in. It would seem that these preferences are due to white influence because in localities less in contact with the said /white/ culture there is less concern in this regard.

• [197] For some time now they have been making use of Indian women expert in midwifery, who give their services for a fee. The midwife may be accompanied and aided by the mother of the pregnant woman in the first place or successively by the others just enumerated if they wish to be present and co-operate in the delivery.

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755 him with a series of magic remedies and medicinal plants which have been fully described in the article /154/ previously cited. Also at the present time it is not uncommon for them to call in the services of a white doctor, either in Uribia, the capital of the peninsula, or in the near-by cities of Venezuela, such as Maracaibo, or in the neighboring Colombian department of Magdalena.

756 But their culture possesses a traditional institution that
755 answers these requirements: the shaman, whose essential
177 activity has been fully treated in the work which we cited at the beginning of this chapter and to which we refer the reader.

● This institution, perhaps the most powerful in Guajiro culture, has been losing value for various reasons already studied in the article we have cited, but it still occupies an outstanding place within the social and cultural whole, to the point that when an Indian is gravely ill, his relatives think immediately of the shaman as the most advisable means of curing the sick man, as this functionary (the shaman) possesses considerable magic powers due to his having been selected by the benevolent spirits to be their intermediary in their frequent contacts with the community. For this reason, to obtain the aid of the shaman is to have in one's favor the friendship and co-operation of the well-wishing spirits who can save the patient from death, because for the Guajiro, illness is caused by the action of
[63] pernicious spirits who want to cause harm and to avenge themselves.

755 The first necessary condition for the shaman to take charge
[49] of the cure is the gift to him of a piece of jewelry, an ornament of gold, generally a necklace, /the value of/ which should be in relation to the family status of the patient as well as the standing of the shaman. A second condition is the tacit submission to the shaman's demands and instructions.

The shaman, once he has decided to take charge of the cure of the patient, goes to his house and submits the sick man to the customary ritual. His practices, which last several

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764 fixed in her ears suspended in a chain, starting with those of her
greatest preference; all her necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and
rings must be placed on the corresponding part of her body. If
the deceased is a man, they also put on his jewelry, as his spirit
764 will need them in the other life to maintain his status beyond the
grave. If he belonged to the rich class, he is shrouded in the
554 following manner: First, they cover his head with a special cloth
woven by his wives; the bottom of the cloth covers his face,
and the ends are fixed behind his head. Over this is placed a
second cloth which reaches down to the belt and pins the arms
laterally along the body. A third cloth covers the legs, and a
fourth may be added to wrap the whole body, but the use of this
latter has been gradually disappearing. Thus enshrouded, he is
put in the enramada /bough-covered shelter/ within the coffin
[177] -- modern custom -- or enveloped in a still fresh hide and placed
in a hammock. Then the lamentations begin.

The custom exists of sending to all the absent consanguineous
764 relatives, the most intimate friends, and in general all ac-
quaintances, word of the death or of the patient's being near death,
as the illness is made known from the first moment, especially
[202] to close relatives. If they are important people, runners are sent
554 as soon as the sick man worsens, so that at the time of his death,
the house is already full of people. As those who arrive to show
their sympathy are so many and they appreciate how impossible
it is for the master and mistress of the house to offer them all
adequate hospitality, the visitors arrive with their hammocks,
water in large pitchers, food, etc., which they bring on their
burros.

764 The messenger sent with the news, especially when he
554 carries it to a consanguineous relative of the deceased, knows
[202] that he must not pronounce the dead man's name, as this would
gravely offend his relatives. For that reason he usually says:
"That relative of yours who lived in such-and-such a place, who
did such-and-such an important thing, has died." Furthermore,
none of those attending /the funeral ceremonies/ will pronounce

/187 cont./

689 a family chat. The man thus addressed, greatly offended by what
191 in Guajiro culture is considered a great insult, flogged him
pitilessly, after having hung him by his hands from a tree. Later
he wanted to kill him but was prevented by the onlookers. As he
was a close relative he could not demand compensation payment,
but he repaid himself for the offense by inflicting punishment.
This was so terrible that the boy became mentally unbalanced and
up to the time of our visit had not fully regained the use of his
faculties. /188/

It is believed that the native who does not use his own language
as a medium of expression among the other natives does not be-
cause he is ashamed of his own people and openly disowns them
by substituting one language for another. Also, to accept another
mode of expression indicates a superiority of the latter over the
former, and of the foreign element over the native.

689 b) Breaking away of the individual from the consanguineous
291 family group and, in general, from the Guajiro community. This
177 is best expressed by the following facts. Some time ago, the
Guajiro boy educated in the mission or who emigrated to other
centers was obliged to use the clothes used by civilizados /non-
natives/. If he returned to his own environment again he had to
use the guayuco once more and give up trousers. Nowadays,
mestizos and rich Indians have adopted the use of a shirt or under-
shirt but without abandoning the guayuco, which has become con-
verted into a garment of a distinctive Guajiro character. When a
man from the peninsula wishes to show that he has broken with
Guajiro culture, that he has thrown off affective, consanguineous,
and legal ties, and that he has placed himself outside their society,
he refuses to use a guayuco, which he hangs up in some noticeable
place as a symbol of his break with the past. An equivalent act
can be seen in the women. The Guajiro Indian woman denies that
she is such when she refuses to wear the robe, but at present the
significance of this rejection has weakened and is now replaced by
the open abandoning of an undergarment, which corresponds to
the men's guayuco, both functionally and symbolically. It is a

/188 cont. /

689 kind of trousers which is kept up by the so-called sirapo, a belt
●177 of cords and beads whose inheritance has a special meaning.

[291] The Guajiro woman who wishes to renounce her society and her culture hangs these garments up and leaves her home.

These two acts are carried out when individual interests clash with collective ones, when a social pattern must be complied with at the risk of not surviving. Here we have the case of certain Guajiro girls educated by Christian norms. When they reach marriageable age, they must submit to their own cultural patterns, which permit polygamy, and they must be bought, just as their female antecessors were. This clashes with the education they have received under other norms. Others reject the family's imposition of its own candidate for a husband and the fact that they are not allowed to follow their own affectionate impulses, etc. To such a girl there are various solutions she may take to disregard the social norms of her consanguineous relatives: committing suicide, if it comes to that, but this idea, which in extreme cases is carried out, also clashes with the moral concepts in which she has been educated; running away, but this recourse is very difficult for a woman of standing with /189/ many relatives. Then she sees as the ultimate solution the prospect of breaking with her culture, which is no longer compatible with her world view as a civilized /civilizado/ woman. She looks for refuge in a civilized institution of this kind and finds it in the Capuchin mission. In this way a number of young Guajiro have arrived looking for protection after having hung up the guayuco and the sirapo as a symbol of the break with everything that was theirs.

This is an offense of a very grave character, not only for the abandoned relatives but for the whole social collectivity. It is thought that whoever does it expresses clearly his contempt for the whole cultural group to which he belonged, placing it by this act on a lower plane. This hurts the native and increases his feeling of inferiority when confronted by the white man and brings to the fore resentments which sometimes have remained

/189 cont./

689
177 hidden. The breaking up of the cultural institutions against which the aggression is directed is accelerated, and these forms /of protest/, in spite of the disagreeable consequences to the individual who makes them, are becoming more numerous. Lately it has not been necessary to resort to such extreme attitudes as those mentioned, since the tenacious refusal of a woman who does not want to conform to a cultural pattern has been sufficient; this conduct does not now place her outside the institutions to which she belongs by birth, but permits her -- without sanction -- to adopt the cultural norms of the whites in this respect, or violate her own as in the case of prostitution and adultery.

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684 Another type of aggression directed against the regimen for collective stability is that determined by punishable acts relating to sex.

The abuse of a young Guajiro girl without legal purchase is an act of aggression which gives cause for the paying of an indemnity.

In this aspect of abuse one must consider violation and surreptitious sexual relations.

The first is more grave and demands a large payment from the offender, not only for illegally making use of property to which he had no right, but for the way he did it, socially humiliating for the woman and her consanguineous relatives because force is employed and wounds received, /both/ evaluated as injuries.

In the second case, in which the expressed consent of the woman is taken for granted, payment is demanded only for the sexual use of the woman and for taunting the woman's family group.

The man who pays for abuse in either of these two cases does not acquire future rights over the woman. He has paid

/211 cont./

423 The geophysical conditions of the region limit the likelihood
428 of agricultural land, which is reduced to strips on the banks of
streams or even to the beds of these streams, which are dry during
the summer months, and to the immediate environs of wells. As
a consequence this limitation has resulted in these arable portions
being traditionally in the hands of a number of small families of
the clan group, who hold them among themselves; and the right
of usufruct is passed from uncle to nephew following the maternal
line, in such a manner that, within the common ownership which
governs clan land, these plots are a kind of private family
property. It is for this reason that a man owning a piece of this
land will parcel it out to his nephews, the sons of his sister, when
these youths reach an age in which their capacity for labor fits
them for agricultural work. Thus it is true that by this system
/212/ of inheritance, the ownership of agricultural land is kept
in the clan, but held also by a particular family of the clan.

423 One can also mention a second form of access to arable land:
when the father cedes to his sons a part of his ownership for its
usufruct and in order that they may help to maintain the home.
But the use of this plot can be in effect only during the father's
lifetime because when he dies his nephews, the sons of his sister
and his legitimate heirs, will take definitive possession of the land.
[177] Only in the process of acculturation does this system break down,
since with Catholic marriage it is the father's sons and not the
nephews who become the recognized heirs of such property.

One may also obtain possession of plots of agricultural land
by the opening up of new land, which occurs when the traditional
family lands lose their fertility or are reduced in size due to
successive inheritance. But for some years this phenomenon has
been quite rare for two reasons: the prolongation of summers,
which makes agricultural work impossible, and emigration, of
which we have already spoken extensively in this study.

423 The agricultural plot, which is almost individual property,
425 can be demarcated by its owner. We say almost individual
ownership because the right to it may be sold. /But/ there is this
fundamental principle with reference to immovable property:

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CONCLUSIONS

I

177 Guajiro culture and society can no longer be considered to be homogeneous bodies. Each of them has been subjected to the influence of contact with other civilizations which are distinct from their own both in manifestation and in human constituents and which have left the mark of their wake in the transformation of institutions as well as individuals. This process, which we may suppose started before the Conquest through relations with other neighboring native groups in the adjacent department of Magdalena and in the bordering republic of Venezuela, was accelerated after the area was colonized and its rhythm has been increasing, in a progression we might call geometric -- with the advance and the development of the republic of Colombia, especially in the latter period of its history when migratory currents have made themselves felt with greater intensity over the length and breadth of its territory for reasons we will not mention here as they are outside the scope of this work.

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563 In any case, racial and cultural mixing /mestizaje/ is one of the most important factors in the study of La Guajira. As one has been able to note in the contents of this study, its institutions and primary cultural patterns -- the traditional ones being understood by this -- are in part conditioned by the new cultural forms adopted through the impact of different groups which have penetrated peacefully or violently into their innermost lives. First, the Spanish conquerors; then the European merchants who took advantage of the pearl trade of the Guajiro Indians; later the colonists, also Spaniards, who established their haciendas in regions in close contact with the peninsula; and last, the mestizo groups, generally negroid, from the Colombian and Venezuelan coasts, who have most directly influenced the social and cultural changes in the Guajiro by reason of their having at their disposal an excellent network of communication by air, land, and sea

/237 cont./

- 177 which furrows all the territory inhabited by the Indians, from the towns of the department of Magdalena to the dominant /238/ urban center of the region, Maracaibo, in the neighboring republic of Venezuela.

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To these factors, which we might call unconscious or involuntary, must be added others that are not so, such as the missionary influence and that of the schools for natives, which, although very few up to the present in comparison with the number of inhabitants in the peninsula, have definitely impressed cultural norms of a civilization quite distinct from autochthonous ones, especially with regard to religion. For, as noted by my husband in his work, Aspectos de la Magia en la Guajira, published in the previous number of this review, magic -- although it influences and determines many of the cultural patterns of the natives and their reactions and ways of thinking -- has been losing ground day by day as the new ideas of the Catholic religion are inculcated in the individual; and its most genuine representative, the shaman, or medicine man, has to a great extent lost his value as spiritual director of the community and is reduced today to the status of a simple curer /curandero/ who sees himself facing an unequal struggle with the medical doctors who arrive in the peninsula, to the point that "if the medical and hygienic services of La Guajira were intensified by the Colombian government, in the course of a few years the shaman would disappear as an institution in the peninsula, and the greater part of the aborigines' magic beliefs, especially with respect to sickness and death, would disappear from the collectivity and would remain only as folkloristic manifestations which recall his presence in times past."

Furthermore, these two factors have determined appreciable changes in another of the strongest Indian institutions: marriage. As the reader will have noted, the chapter which we dedicated to this social aspect is probably the most extensive of the study we have just presented, a fact due not to a greater collection of notes on this subject but to its relative importance within the aggregate of cultural institutions. From it is directly derived the concept of

/237 cont. /

177 family, of status, education, etc., and with it are related phenomena as outstanding as the clan. A great portion of customary law applies to married life. The breakdown of traditional marriage has brought as a consequence, as we have affirmed in the pertinent sections, the decline of the institutions that are linked directly or indirectly with it. The greatest changes suffered by Guajiro culture are due to transformations of marriage traditional forms brought about by acculturation in recent times.

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II

177 But the action of acculturation has not been completely
191 unilateral; that is, it is not only the Guajiro who has felt the influence of mestizo groups, but in his turn he has imposed some of his cultural patterns on them, which, as is logical, are hinged to the three most characteristic aspects of his culture: marriage, magic, and language. For it is certain that foreigners -- understanding by this term those who are not Guajiro -- who enter their country find themselves obliged to learn the Guajiro language in order to carry on business transactions and even to enjoy friendly relations with the natives; otherwise they will likely fail in their intent because, although the native as a general rule is acquainted with the Spanish language and handles it relatively well, he nevertheless refuses to make frequent use of it. It can be observed in the business center of Uribia, the capital of the commissary, that the business establishments most patronized by the Indian are those whose owners use Guajiro for their conversation and business. And the so-called "caciques," who in general terms are no other than Guajiro mestizos or foreigners who have acquired a strong economic position in the country, do not reach their degree of prestige until they completely master the language with its conventional turn of sentences for solemn occasions and the proper use of convincing words, as we stated in the pertinent chapter.

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177 We also saw in the section referring to marriage that the
582 individual who goes to La Guajira and seeks to marry has two ways of doing so: by following the traditional norm of La Guajira, that is, buying the woman in accordance with the conventional payment and in agreement with the girl's parents and submitting to all the regulations in force regarding marriage, or marrying in the Catholic church, in this case causing the woman to break away from all the norms of her culture and from her society to the point of her being no longer considered a member of the same and in consequence finding herself excluded from all the guarantees that this same society can offer her in any case of difficulty or conflict with her husband or with other groups distinct from her own clan group. Although many make use of this second form of marriage, the majority do marry by the Guajiro ritual, although they may introduce certain changes and frequently do not comply with all the laws and obligations which form part of the primary institution of traditional Guajiro marriage.

177 As most of the inhabitants of the Colombian and Venezuelan coast are negroid, as we have just stated, and for this reason /240/ have a past of considerably superstitious and magic traditions, it is logical that they are readily influenced by the beliefs which dominate the Guajiro mentality. It is for this reason that these people are so eager to buy different kinds of magic charms and so strict in the observance of set norms of conduct related to the totality of Guajiro magic practices.

III

Culture, therefore, has suffered appreciable changes which have considerably altered the traditional conformation. But this change has not taken place in isolation. It has developed in unison with a transformation of society as a whole, which is also outstanding. The mixing /mestizaje/ of

/240 cont./

177 the races, as well as of cultures started in the colonial period, according to the records of the chroniclers of those times, not only with the whites who penetrated the territory on expeditions of conquest or trade but also with the Negroes whom the natives had taken as slaves in exchange for pearls each time that the slave ships dropped anchor off their coast. This mixing continued sporadically, giving the characteristics of indomitable ferocity of La Guajira throughout the colonial period, and has accelerated as has cultural contact during recent years for reasons already noted.

144 This does not mean, naturally, that the racial composition
177 of the La Guajira Peninsula is exclusively mestizo -- a mixture
563 of Indians with whites, mestizos, Negroes, or mulattos -- because the greatest percentage of inhabitants is still pure Indian, especially so in the districts where they have had less contact with the civilized world, as happens in the Sierra de Jarara, for whose inhabitants there is a term very common in the whole territory, cerreros, that is, pure Indians in the widest sense of the word: Indians who preserve not only their physical characteristics but their unalterable psychic and cultural traits.

This crossing, as has happened in all the cases which we have been able to observe in societies dominated by other cultures, has been effected by the combination of the feminine element in the dominated race and the masculine element on the dominating side. The cases where the opposite has occurred are very rare. It may be added that this appears to be a general law, at least among the South American communities which had to submit to the invasion of Europeans, brought about in various ways and according to the period of penetration. /241/

177 Guajiro traditional institutions were so strong that the changes
563 in social composition did not at first essentially affect their cultural patterns. The newcomers adapted themselves perfectly to the norms of native life and made common cause with them, only differing in their physical type resulting from cross-breeding /mestizaje/ and possibly some cultural manifestations

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93 imposed by the father, if he stayed in the peninsula. Even today, many of the mestizos of La Guajira follow the Indian way of life, accepting their norms and being subject to their laws, and approving and participating in all outstanding times of life. One may often observe in them the appearance of a civilizado, that is, of an outsider to the Guajiro culture, by their external appearance and by certain forms of their conduct; but when one gets closer to them or sees them in their drunken moments, all their native ancestry comes to the fore and the mestizo, who had appeared to be a "white," becomes completely Indian.

IV

177 But the process of acculturation brings about, in the individuals, as it does in the case of culture and society, definite new forms, which slowly go adjusting their ways of feeling and thinking, which condition their reactions to new patterns, the fruit of mixture of the traditional and the foreign. It could not be otherwise, given the interaction existing among these three component elements of the group: culture, society, and the individual. For this same reason, the personality of the Guajiro is very difficult to explain today given on the peninsula, as we have just seen, that persons and even entire groups who preserve intact their original cultural birthright live together with individuals and groups who have adapted their system of life to a new method, the product of the mixture of several cultures. But the process is in action and one can safely presume the ultimate unification of all the individuals under the new patterns.

The forms of reaction of the individual, as we have noted in the early chapters of this study, which correspond to what is the life cycle of the individual in La Guajira, have become transformed. Their response to different situations has changed, and their systems of compulsion related to these situations have suffered variations in practice, which it is natural to expect. The /242/ very morals of the native have weakened from their

/342 cont./

original form because the concepts of marriage, family, and social organization in general have been partially transformed by external intrusions. It is clear that the climatic changes of recent years, with their disastrous consequences, have contributed in an appreciable manner to these changes, among which should be counted emigration and prostitution. But the fundamental cause of change in Guajiro cultural structure has been conditioned by acculturation.

It is almost impossible for a primitive community placed in contact with pockets of modern civilization which surround and encircle them more and more to remain unaltered in their ways of life. It is logical that it will have to accept new techniques, more modern economic systems, ideas more in accord with new times, and for such reasons be forced to change the legendary institutions, if not consciously then unconsciously, slowly in some cases or violently in others. This is the case in La Guajira. Systems of violent interaction could not break the Guajiro spirit. The natives knew how to preserve their independence in the face of the continuous assaults by the Spaniards and in spite of the peaceful penetration of settlers, but to do this they had to adopt new methods copied from their enemies. They were forced to use firearms and horses for war, two vital elements in their independence; to change their war tactics and break down their traditional isolation and the proverbial independence of the various clans that compose their society and to unite in the struggle against the white invaders who envied them their pearls and dreamed of adding another people to the chain that they had made subject to the Spanish crown. From then on, Guajiro culture felt foreign influences which finally annihilated it and incorporated it into the Colombian nation.

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V

177

It would seem that when acculturation was less, the status ascribed to the individual was founded on his membership in a clan. If this clan was economically strong with numerous male members, the individual occupied a well-established position, that is, there was a clan stratification which conferred on its members by fact a corresponding social position. Within each one of these consanguineous units there was a second stratification according to which its members were graded, usually with reference to their personal wealth and their particular /243/ physical, psychic, and cultural conditions and qualities -- shaman, cacique, etc. A third scale was within the family itself and referred to the special position of each one of its components within the family circle. The head of each one of these social units occupied the predominant place -- the maternal uncle most important -- and the grading went in descending order down to the share, or younger child.

But at the present time the dispersion of the clan, due to acculturation which grows greater every day, has caused less importance to be given to the initial stratification, because within the peninsular territory the same clan now occupies different positions or statuses in accordance with the region in which it moves and with the members composing these groups separated from the original consanguineous unit. Contributing further to this is the fact that territorial property which previously was absolutely communal has gradually become individualized and converted into the privilege of a limited number of families of those that comprise the clan collectivity. The consequence of these phenomena of acculturation is that it is no longer the clan that determines the ascribed status of the individual in the first instance, but this is given, first of all, for his personal psychic, physical, and cultural conditions and for the restricted family unit to which he belongs.

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177 In other words, in previous times status was recognized as a function of the clan and for the clan, while at the present time status has a more universal value as it is related to all the social conglomerate, since, as we have said, the clans have been splitting up and losing their original cohesion due to the phenomena of acculturation. Nevertheless, even in those times there were certain individual statuses that transcended the narrow limits of the clan and invaded the community as a whole. Such, for example, was the case of the piache, or medicine man, who occupied a superior position within the general stratification in relation to the rest because his function as the intermediary between two worlds, the real and that of the spirits, benevolent and malevolent, conferred on him the position of a true spiritual director, not for the reduced group within which his totemic, consanguineous relatives moved, but for the entire community, for every person who required his services, for every family that needed his help, all, of course, within the limitations which interclan relations imposed, particularly when the regimen for social stability had been violated and the clan groups affected were in a situation verging on war. On the level immediately below was the arbitrator, /244/ or palabra /literally, "word" in Spanish/, wrongly called "cacique" on occasion, whose prestige by reason of his office as intermediary between different groups having a quarrel about a violation of the regimen for social stability also went beyond the limits of his own clan and extended far beyond the borders of his consanguineous limits, because the economically and numerically weak clan groups made a practice of seeking the services of an arbitrator belonging to a high group to represent them in their conflicts.

These two statuses were, and still are, determined by different causes: The first, or that of the medicine man, was, as shown by my husband in the study previously quoted, involuntary, so to speak, as it was the spirits of departed shamans who in a moment of exaltation or of illumination conferred on him this power, which was later ratified by a committee of shamans and diviners. The second, on the other hand, depends above

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177 all on very well-defined personal qualities, such as command of the language, possession of wealth, etc.

Within the evolutionary process occurring in Guajiro institutions, these categories are beginning to be inverted so that at the present time the position of political head, or arbitrator, is probably more important than that of shaman. The "cacique" is today a type more universal, more consulted, and more respected. The shaman's power is obviously declining, and he is ceding his position to foreigners.

Following the descending scale of positions, we come to the herder, whose function which has come about as the result of a new concept of wealth: stock raising. We have repeatedly remarked in this study on the essential value of nomadic stock raising in the economic life of the peninsula, which has created a new outlook in La Guajira, where wealth is always interpreted in terms of the number of cattle that an individual is able to own. For this reason, he who is outstanding in this activity is the one who does it successfully, who possesses the greatest head of cattle and controls land of personal or communal ownership suitable for grazing, that is, with good pasture, early rains, and wells giving a constant supply of water.

Also included within the scope of economic life and as an effect of acculturation we find the functions of trader and public employee. The trader, usually a mestizo, is associated with the movement of contraband merchandise throughout the peninsula, with agricultural products being sent to Venezuela from the department of Magdalena, or with foreign manufactured goods introduced from the islands of Aruba and Curaçao. His intervention is due to the perfect knowledge that /245/ he has of the country on one hand, and, on the other, to his being on many occasions driver or owner of vehicles which he places in the service of smugglers, as partner or for payment. At times he smuggles on his own account, buying contraband merchandise which he moves to Venezuela, sells in La Guajira, or transports to the interior of Colombia, following the route through the department of Magdalena,

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177 Working as a government employee also confers prestige and furthermore constitutes a sure income within the economic ups and downs of stock raising conditions existent in La Guajira. These administrative posts are in the main given to individuals who already have great prestige in the zone administered, with the object in view of facilitating administrative and, on occasion, legal work in the commissary government.

The status of hunter was without doubt the most important when this activity was one of the sources of economic life in the peninsula. Today it is reduced to a secondary plane, but it is still maintained in the person of the chief of hunting expeditions, who is the one best acquainted with the topography and the most likely haunts of game, who knows the feeding habits of animals, the paths which they take, and, from the smallest detail, can deduce what kind of game is near, its size, etc., since one of his essential qualities is that of being a skillful tracker. Furthermore, he is in possession of weapons adequate for each type of animal, weapons which he has made himself and magic charms for each species to ensure safety and success in hunting. It is also necessary that he be perfectly familiar with the tactics of hunting so as to be able to place to the best advantage the different participants in the expedition; he should sacrifice his personal interest in favor of the others so that his companions will recognize his generosity when distributing the catch.

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546 When we consider the individual in the family unit, we also find a gradation of status in direct proportion to the importance and position of each member of the family in the home. At the very head we find the eldest maternal uncle, whose responsibilities for the economic-social backing of the family, especially in relation to nephews, his sister's sons, are very important, as we have noted throughout this study. He is the

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596 head of the family and his decisions are accepted because he assumes absolute responsibility for the family. Hence the absolute obligation of consanguineous relatives dependent on him to respect /246/ his wishes and give way to his decisions. In the Guajiro family organization, in which descent is matrilineal, the father is simply a biological element without social or family ties with his children. This is what occurs in the traditional family system, but at the present time the status of the maternal uncle and the father are in conflict, and the latter tends to replace the former in the family group, due to the change in the concept of kinship which is upsetting the legendary canons of matrilinear descent. Thus the status of the father is gradually rising, affecting the relations between nephews and sons, for, if previously the nephews, sons of a sister, were those who attracted the men's attention, now it is the sons who are gradually taking this place to the extent that, as we mentioned in the chapter entitled Inheritance, veritable clashes arise between one and the other after a man's death with respect to sharing in the goods of the deceased. Male children, in view of this new concept of kinship between father and son which has arisen, particularly through the new form of marriage brought about by acculturation, believe themselves to have inalienable rights to their father's possessions at his death to the exclusion of the maternal nephews, who should submit to the same rule and expect their inheritance not from their uncles but from their own fathers. Furthermore, son and father, in accordance with the system of uterine descent could become, and actually did become, enemies when the paternal and the maternal clans went to war with each other, but now the son fights at the side of his father in the majority of cases and is, in turn, represented by his father in rites of passage.

177 Again, the question of marriage presents itself as one of the most important, if not the most important, in Guajiro social organization. Any upheaval that occurs in this has its repercussions on all other traditional institutions, which do not

/246 cont. /

- 177 resist the pressure exercised on the latter. Changes in the idea of marriage automatically will change: descent, inheritance, interclan relations, the value of women, the education of children, the concept of kinship, the right to land, etc., -- so closely are all these items tied one to the other!

VI

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562 As was natural to expect, acculturation has also affected the status of women considered as members of the consanguineous group. In the traditional organization, we can say that the preponderant status of the woman within the family is that of mother, who is, so to speak, the second head of the home, after the /247/ maternal uncle who guides and directs the activities of the cell. But this unilateral valuation is being transformed into a double one: that of wife-mother. We will clarify this point. We have seen in the pertinent chapters how a wife's value was determined exclusively by her position, which in turn was determined by the maternal clan to which she belonged. This valuation was materially shown by the high or low payment which a man decided to pay for her on taking her for his wife, in accordance with her clan position. Within the man's clan, relations with the woman were limited to the mutual help given to her husband for her purchase price and their assistance in the preparatory ceremonies of the marriage. But there was no link that tied them to her or to her children, as a consequence of uterine descent. But at the present time the presence of the wife of one of the male members of the clan is taken into account since she now fulfills certain functions which permit her relative incorporation into the clan, or at least into the small family of the husband. On his part, the man has changed his position with regard to her by not looking on her simply as a biological being, but as a companion. For the same reason the status of maternal aunt,

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562 in relation to her sister's children, has been weakened in view of the intervention of the paternal aunts, previously unrecognized in relation to their nephews and nieces in the masculine line.

Women, considered simply as a social component, have acquired a higher position owing to the cultural changes that have affected the community due to their contacts with other civilizations. The most important advance, perhaps, is the relative liberalizing of clan rules in their relation to marriage, as the woman does not submit so voluntarily to the husband that her maternal relatives pick for her, but has sufficient strength of will, backed up by actions which are happening with ever greater frequency, to choose her man herself even though this may mean for her the breaking off of all ties which link her to family and clan organization. Furthermore, she acquires with the white marriage institution legal powers to combat polygamy.

VII

654 Having outlined the various influences of acculturation on the individual, on society, and on Guajiro culture, and having sketched in this study the life cycle of the individual and some of the most characteristic social institutions of the community, we can now refer in a general way to the conformation of the status of the native in its different aspects. /248/

The points of reference of individual status of an inhabitant of La Guajira may be summarized as follows:

1. Membership through blood in a powerful clan, and within it being the son of a woman of high position, who is a first wife (remember the presence of polygamy and its conflicts). This implies:

A. Control of sufficient wealth represented by:

a) Numerous heads of livestock, preferably cows and horses.

b) Family jewels set with tuma, the traditional stone; possession of ancient, solid gold or silver idols.

[4 cont.]

221 on the other hand, is a synonym of hunger, misery, and of death.

221 The conditions of their geographical situation and the oc-
361 cupation of stock grazing, to which the Indians have devoted
233 themselves since the Conquest, have accentuated their nomadic
character because of the need to bring their herds to places where
the indispensable pasture and water are available. Furthermore,
this need has held back the formation of towns in the true sense
of the word, as what is called a rancherfa ["hamlet"] in La
Guajira, is nothing more than two or three huts of wood and thatch,
inhabited by people related to each other and which may be sev-
eral kilometers away from other rancherfas. The presence of
water at minimum distances greatly influences the location [5]
of these habitations, so that the occupants are not obliged to
walk long distances.

177 Only in those localities where the influences of civilizados
361 [generally, nonnatives] are greatly felt do we find what we may
call urban centers, but in these the foreign element is more in
evidence than the aboriginal. Such for example is the case of
Uribia, capital of the Comisaría; Nazaret, a mission center;
Maicao, Puerto Estrella, and Carraipfa, points of trade with
Venezuela, Aruba, Curaçao, and the interior of the country; and
Manaure and Bahfa Honda, centers of the salt industry.

* * *

175 The Guajiro Indian was never completely conquered.
648 Throughout the Conquest and the colonization, he kept up a
series of wars with the Spanish authorities, whom he learned
always to resist, thus maintaining his independence. But he kept
up his trade relations with the whites, not only Spaniards but
Europeans in general, who reached his shores where they estab-
lished stations for fishing and the pearl trade, as well as with
the group of Spaniards resident in Rifohacha, the western limit
of the peninsula.

175 These contacts with European civilization were slowly
177 changing their ways of life in the major part of its aspects, when-
ever the Guajiro incorporated a series of relatively new elements

[5 cont.]

175 into his culture, especially into the economy, some of their
177 social institutions, and even in the aspect of their racial composition. Acculturation has been greatly accelerated in recent years due to the ever increasing presence of foreign elements in La Guajira Peninsula, facilitated by the intervention of the government in this administrative section, by the development of communication, and by the commercial possibilities that dealing with the natives presents.

105 The fundamental change in the Guajiro's life occurred in
175 their economy. Until the arrival of the conquistadors, according to the data available, the Guajiro were a hunting and fishing
177 people who lived in a constant state of nomadism to the point of having no true habitations, as has been stated by different chroniclers of Conquest times. They also practiced a rudimentary agriculture, mainly the cultivation of corn and yucca, the bases of their vegetable food and of their principal drinks.

[648] With the establishment of stock raising centers by the Spaniards in the regions bordering on La Guajira, the natives found a new source of subsistence. They started a series [6] of thefts from the haciendas which enabled them to obtain animals suited for raising, which adapted wonderfully to the normal conditions of their territory, where during the winter season pasture grows spontaneously, pasture which previously had served only to feed the deer and other herbivorous animals which form part of the fauna of La Guajira.

With the introduction of this new economic element the native began, step by step, to change his economy of fishing, hunting, and rudimentary agriculture into a new system based principally on stock grazing. His state as a nomadic hunter was transformed to that of herdsman, also nomadic because of the geographic conditions we have just described in previous paragraphs. They also changed their mode of transport by learning to use horses and asses, and even their tactics of war were appreciably changed once they could make use of horses in their battles, placing them thereby on an equal footing with the Spanish conquistador; as in addition to this decisive element, [439] they could also count on firearms obtained in the pearl trade with foreign ships which came up their coast.

[6 cont.]

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However, at the beginning the fundamental change in their economy did not affect their most characteristic social institutions. They preserved, almost to the present, their family organization based on the uterine line of kinship and all the other institutions which derive from, or are directly or indirectly related, to it. Only now with the presence of an ever increasing number of foreign elements who are attracted to La Guajira territory by different circumstances is the Indian gradually losing these fundamental ideas of his organization and beginning to change them, forced to do so by events, to the point that today it is becoming difficult to decide up to what point a social phenomenon is autochthonous and to what point it is impregnated with new ideas brought in by evangelists, government and military officials, and traders.

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In the racial aspect the phenomenon shows up less strongly, although, as in other aspects, it has been gradually accelerating as means of communication develop and the contraband between the islands of Aruba and Curaçao, the department of Magdalena, and the port of Maracaibo increase. Racial mixing [mestizaje] began in the colony not only between Spaniards and Indians, as happened in the greater part of Latin America, but also with the Negroes who were acquired as slaves from the Dutch and British slave traders in exchange for pearls. Naturally, this mixture was of insignificant proportions, but [7] at the present time it is developing more rapidly, stemming from the element, also Negroid, of the coastal areas of Colombia and Lake Maracaibo. In spite of all this, at the present time one can still find a large percentage of the pure element in La Guajira, especially in the regions distant from the traffic with Maracaibo or with the interior of Colombia, or relatively isolated from civilizado centers of La Guajira such as Uribia, Puerto Estrella, Puerto López, etc.

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73) In the past five to six years La Guajira has suffered extremely severe summers which have almost completely crushed its economic bases, stock grazing and agriculture, for scarcely enough rainfall has fallen to save their pastures or their harvests.

755 [22 cont.]

796 of the patient or of his family -- then those attending are presented with a good portion of meat.

*756 Shamanistic treatment of animals. When pestilence
231 breaks out among a Guajiro Indian's animals, he has no other
755 known recourse to repel it than to seek the services of a shaman.
As he already knows in a way the accustomed ceremonial in such cases, he prepares days beforehand a sufficient quantity of corn chicha, which is used in the chicha-maya dances, and he invites a large group of women to come to the dance. He then calls in the shaman, who, once arrived on the scene, has all the animals collected and enclosed in a large corral. While this operation is being carried out, the shaman begins to prepare himself for the ceremony, inviting his protector spirit to cast out the pestilence, and dressing himself (or better said, undressing himself) in a neighboring hut as is customary for the ceremony of the cure of human beings, keeping on his loincloth if he is a man and her dress if a woman. He then places a crown of wool on his head and readies the maraca, which he keeps in his hand during the entire event. Following this, he enters the place where the animals are, goes in among them, and turns himself around in circles about them, continually shaking the maraca and spitting on their bodies the juice from the manilla he is continually chewing. During all this time, he intones his ritual invocatory chants, [23] which are different from those used for the cure of humans, and he never stops shaking the maraca. This operation generally lasts for several days and is only suspended for those moments when the shaman rests. When he considers that the evil spirits which have caused the pestilence have been successfully driven off, he suspends his activities and orders for the fiesta to begin, which is started by the sacrifice of an animal, the distribution of chicha to those present, and the dance. The animals are driven to the fields while numerous gunshots are fired (in older times arrows were shot off). These are intended to complete the work of the shaman in driving off the evil spirits of the disease.

*756 Shamans' dreams. When a shaman dreams of a long trip
787 through unknown territory, it is an evident sign that he is due to
[76] die. When the dream is over, he attempts through "shamanizing"

[33 cont.]

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*756 We do not wish to question Professor Métraux's statement about the influence of White contact in relation to medicine-women in the other groups cited by him, as we are not objectively acquainted with them. But with regard to the Guajiro, we have to make the clarification that in the descriptions collected by us in the field, it is precisely the woman who really initiates magic, or better said shamanism, among the Indians, when she obliges her nephew to follow her own career. This aspect can be better understood when the reader comes to the section of this chapter entitled "The shaman in oral literature."

[174] The fact that women appear as shamans in oral literature demonstrates the antiquity of the institution, as this literature faithfully preserves the most remote traditions of the group.

*756 The shaman, man of two worlds. All that we have seen in connection with the life cycle of the Guajiro shaman makes us think that he is what we have called him in the subtitle that heads these paragraphs: a man of two worlds — the world of the living and the world of the spirits of the dead. [34]

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554 The communication which he establishes after all the preparatory ceremonies with one or several protector spirits who lavish on him every kind of counsel and instruction and even protect him against evil in all its manifestations: illness, enemies, public calamities, etc., make of him a man distinct from all the rest. His status is superior to that of other mortals because in his hands he has power over both good and evil. It is this duality that binds with his science a man who is both sacred and human, a being respected by all but feared at the same time, a good man, able to cure illnesses, but also a malignant being, liable to let loose the fury of the spirits beyond the grave. He is respected, loved, feared, and even, we might dare to say, profoundly hated.

[783] What predominates in him above all is the characteristic of impurity due to contamination from death. Sacred and impure become confounded in him; he is sacred because he is untouchable, and he is untouchable because of his participation with death through his protector spirits.

*756 His dual position as inhabitant of two worlds, involuntary it is true, depends on two fundamentally simple facts: first, his

[39 cont.]

105 But the Conquest came. The Guajiro Indian kept his in-
175 dependence by means of wars and raids and maintained his per-
177 sonality intact as far as possible. His internal organization en-
dured and continued manifesting itself without changes for a
time; family organization, bond service, slavery, interclan
wars, the laws of inheritance and compensation payment, all
the social structure, including marriage, continued in the tradi-
tional forms. However, the theft of livestock from the neigh-
boring Spanish ranches began, and the Guajiro Indians learned
to master the art of stock grazing until they became converted
into a group of herders with occasional agriculture, hunting, and
fishing.

The situation was thus undergoing a change apparently
gentle in the form it took, but violent in the results it produced
on marriage, inheritance, the status of the clan as a collectivity
and of the individual in particular, which we attribute to the
cause just noted and also to the acculturation provoked by the ever
increasing number of civilizado elements in the peninsula:
missionaries, military men, employees, traders, and adventurers,
who have managed to introduce, as we have said in the intro-
duction, a number of customs from their places of origin, still
small [in number] but which slowly are beginning to undermine
the social organization of the natives.

177 All this has clashed with the strongest institution of primi-
* 1756 tive La Guajira, the shaman, who has had to withstand the
[1747] challenge of the missionaries, who inculcate in the Indians'
minds Catholic beliefs or Christian beliefs in general, absolute-
ly opposed to the primary animism and the magic laws which
determined, and still determine, in part the acts, lives, and
deaths in general of all and each one of the members of the
Guajiro community.

The new concept of wealth based on stock grazing, the
presence of civilizado elements, the network of communications
that now crosses the peninsula, the decisive action of the mis-
sionaries and schools have all combined to reduce the shaman
to his minimum proportions. Of course, there still remain ele-
ments in the native which allow one to classify him as framed
by a magic mentality, but external influences are carrying him

[39 cont.]

● 177 in the direction of civilization, which [40] powerfully attracts
* 756 him. We can almost affirm that if the medical and hygienic
services of La Guajira were intensified by the Colombian govern-
ment, in the course of a few years the shaman would disappear
as an institution in the peninsula, and the greater part of the
aborigines' magic beliefs, especially with respect to sickness
and death, would disappear from the collectivity and would
remain only as folkloristic manifestations which recall his
presence in times past.

+ 756 The decadence of this institution can be noted very easily
558 if we look at what Uricoechea says in the introduction to the
177 work already cited: "They always had their shamans, or curers,
and diviners to consult and respect. The shamans had their
schools in the woods, and they were legislators in addition to
being doctors; furthermore, they were the priests and inter-
preters of observances and beliefs which they, in common with
all the inhabitants of America, had." (37) Compare what is

37. Celedón, Rafael. Op. cit.,
Introduction, p. 20.

said in these paragraphs with all that we have stated, and you
will note the enormous decrease in prestige that the shaman
has suffered in La Guajira in the space of a few lustrums.

[41]

III

Magic and Sacrifice

782 In Guajiro culture we can distinguish four types of sacri-
fices:

1. Those of a funeral ritual character.
2. Those of a harmful warlike character.
3. Those made to forestall the effects of dreams.
4. Those made to propitiate the protector spirit of
the shamans.

[58 cont.]

755 associated with some prohibitions of a taboo nature or with established social customs, the origin and in part even significance of which is unknown. But what attracts our attention in this aspect of Guajiro medical [59] practice is preventative rather than curative nature. To demonstrate this, we quote some examples:

753 During the period of pregnancy, neither the father nor the
755 mother should be present at the exhumation of the dead, a cere-
843 mony which the Indians hold to comply with the rites of the
secondary burial. If this injunction is disobeyed, the infant
about to be born will, at birth or a few days later, have a sickly
appearance and will be afflicted with constant diarrhea and
night sweats, and will be characterized by a very pronounced
paleness and extreme thinness.

755 If this occurs, if through carelessness the parents witness
the exhumation of a corpse during the mother's pregnancy and
her child is born sickly, they will not try to blame the child's
illness on any other cause than that just stated. In accordance
with this decision, they will proceed to apply the curing method
appropriate for such an emergency, which, as we noted in the
previous chapter, "Magic and Sacrifice," is as follows: (a) They
wait until there is a fiesta of a ceremonial nature for the ex-
humation of human remains and then place the infant inside the
recently opened body of the animal that has been sacrificed for
the ceremony. (b) If the infant cannot be taken to the place
where the ceremony is being held, a bone of the sacrificed ani-
mal is taken, left to dry, and cooked, and the infant is bathed
in this water. (c) If there is no possibility of a ceremony of the
type described being held in the near future, a hole is made in
the sand, and the child is buried therein up to its neck and is then
covered with the loose earth.

843 Neither should the husband of a pregnant woman under any
845 circumstances dig a grave or assist in the construction of a vault
764 (an element of acculturation) destined for the primary or second-
845 ary burial of any person. If he does his wife will suffer the con-
845 sequences of this disrespect in her delivery, which will not be
normal: prolonged for several days, very painful, and with seri-
ous consequences for the mother and for the coming child.

[71 cont.]

811 feeling. Not being able to understand the logical processes of
life with its principal phenomena of birth, development, growth,
old age, and death, the Indian looks for an explanation that
agrees, at least in appearance, with his beliefs, with his limited
capacity for knowledge, and he steadfastly adheres to the tra-
ditions received in cultural inheritance, traditions which all
have a subjective flavor and in which the supernatural, the pure-
ly metaphysical -- even within the physical phenomenon itself --
dominates the intellectual and sensible panorama. If at first he
811 attributed the phenomenon of birth to the supernatural action,
844 far off in space, of an animal, a plant, or other object which
in course of time became his totem in his mythical ancestor
made divine, later his mental explorations try to find a new
explanation; his totem for different causes having now lost its
value and only remaining with him as a vague memory, he tries
to find, let us say, a new explanation which agrees better with
the reality surrounding him. Hence we find him affirming, like
the Guajiro, that birth is due to the union of the masculine
semen with the menstrual blood, which produces the fetus. The
association, even if not exact, is not extraordinarily far from
the truth in as much as the association of both these factors
brings about an apparent conjunction of the same in order to ac-
complish the complicated processes of fertility and birth.

761 But, in the explanation of the phenomenon of death, it is
177 the realms of the unknown which continue to exert a major influ-
ence on the minds of primitives and, in the present case, on the
minds of the Guajiro in particular. It is true that the constant
influence of missionaries, colonists, traders and stock breeders,
teachers and soldiers has started to change the state of things,
inculcating in the Indian another class of beliefs which are not
always coincident with reality, for the simple reason that three
different races live together in our country, [72] and all are
equally fanatical in their beliefs: the Negro with his fetishism and
fantastic mythology; the Indian also with his mythology and his
subjection to the spirits of the dead; and the Spaniard, as fanatic
as the rest or as renegade. But it is also true that in the Indian's
personality there still remains strongly impressed his primitive be-
liefs, his traditions accumulated over thousands of years, which

[72 cont.]

761 have been transformed step by step through the evolutionary
177 process of thought as it fulfills its stupendous labor towards perfection.

761 Death is not a real death to the Guajiro. Accustomed as
775 he is to interpret sleep as a separation, a liberation of the spirit, the universal soul, from the framework of the body (Cf. "Sickness and Medicine"), death to him is nothing more than a greater and definite liberation of the spirit to go from this world to another — to that of the spirits — unknown and phantomlike but as real to his imagination as his own existence. For this same reason and because of the fear infused in the primitive by these disembodied spirits — which have left their material body and are capable of taking on new and unknown forms, capable of transporting themselves to a distance, capable in fact of deeds unachievable by mortal man — the Indians believe it to be indispensable for their tranquillity to practice a series of ceremonies, rites, to maintain a fixed and constant attitude toward the dead, because these spirits by the physical fact of the separation of the soul from the body possess special potentialities which confer on them the power to harm the living whenever their person has been offended by the violation of any of the norms established in the ceremonial for the dead.

We also have to take into account the fact that for the primitive a dead person is not only absolutely a sacred being — and as such untouchable — but he is also considered a potential enemy. Freud recognizes this when he states: "We know already that the dead are powerful sovereigns; possibly it would surprise us to find out now that they are also considered enemies." (50)

50. Freud. Totem y Tabú [Totem & Taboo], II, 75.

This duality, which we have shown in the previous paragraph, corroborated by the quotation from Professor Freud, will be seen more fully as we progress in this study and consider the different categories of danger that are attributed to the spirits of the dead in accord with the circumstances of their death or the disrespect with which they were treated. [73]

[91 cont.]

789 But in our opinion this definition would be incomplete if we did not add that fetishism implies a special cult, a veneration on the part of the owner. The fetish becomes almost the material representation of a personal and protecting divinity.

The talisman, in turn, "exercises an active magic influence, given that it can give fortune or success to whoever carries it." (58)

58. Castiglioni. Op. cit., VI, 87.

The difference between the last two, which apparently could be confused with each other, is the following: The fetish is a magic article which is at the disposal of its owner, who can use it to obtain his personal good or to do harm to others. On the other hand, a talisman is independent of the will of its owner. Its function simply consists in providing him with "fortune or success."

[92] This clarification having been made, we proceed with our study of magic in the life of the Guajiro Indians.

177 The general term contras ["charms"] in La Guajira and in 789 the greater part of Colombia covers those magic objects which can be included in the three categories we have just noted. These are not peculiar to any determined racial group but belong to the people, this being understood in its widest meaning. These charms are equally appreciated by an Indian, a Negro, a mestizo, or a White, and for this reason they are found in almost all the social and spatial spheres of Colombia.

But what is the most interesting as a social phenomenon is the symbiosis that has occurred. What is Negro, what is Spanish, and what is Indian are so closely linked, so perfectly amalgamated, that it is now little short of impossible to determine the origin of the different influences in many of the aspects of magic and of popular sorcery, to elucidate what has an African, an Amerindian, or a peninsular origin. All these ethnographic elements which at a historic moment formed an integral and essential part of the cultural basis of the different communities have been converted, thanks to the racial and cultural intermixing, into the elements of folklore of these new peoples that have arisen as a result of such crossing.

[92 cont.]

177 The previous statement is borne out to such a point that
789 even in native communities that are quite homogeneous, anthro-
pologically speaking, as is La Guajira, it is difficult to learn
which beliefs, which practices of magic or of sorcery, are
autochthonous and which are acculturations due to contacts with
the neighboring mestizos who, given the circumstances we have
noted of being in the greater part mulattos, have a considerable
collection of this type of beliefs and practices inherited largely
from their Negro ancestors.

As it is totally impossible for us to make a list of the
origin of all and each one of the autochthonous Guajiro beliefs,
we shall have to confine ourselves to showing the similarities
which they have in the whole of Colombian folklore. It is clear
that this similarity will not always indicate acculturation, but
only similarity due to the influence of other native groups that
have disappeared but who once lived in Colombian territory, or
exact beliefs which reached there from other continents and
which can only be explained by the general evolutionary process
of human mentality.

789 Characteristics of charms. 1. Some charms can be lent by
their owner to another person, if both the owner and [93] the
[426] borrower are of the same sex and if the charm is to be used by
the borrower so that he may benefit by its virtues.

[262] 2. To make use of them, the individual during the period
of action must submit himself to a special, very strict diet.
The breaking of any one of the norms will cancel the effect and
bring about serious prejudice to health, if not results contrary to
what he had looked for and expected. The way to carry out this
diet will be found described in the following section, "Application
and Effects."

3. It is sufficient for a stranger to look at the magic object
belonging to someone else for all its magic power to be trans-
ferred to him. For this reason it is an indispensable requisite to
keep it safely from other people's sight and always to be wary of
this type of violation.

438 4. It is very difficult to obtain a true charm because while
789 those who sell these are old women very practiced in this art,
673 many unscrupulous women often devote themselves to the trade

[99 cont.]

751 the charm. He has two aims in view, to render himself immune
726 from harm from his enemies' weapons, and to acquire courage
574 and coolness in the coming fight. This type of charm is called
ranfa in Guajiro.

754 The evil eye. This is one of the beliefs which seems to us to
[172] have been acquired by the Guajiro Indians through acculturation,
as we have not found it in any purely native group but, on the
contrary, have found it very widely spread in all parts of Colombia,
[171] especially among the mestizos. We have personally encountered it in the departments of Cauca, Valle del Cauca, Tolima, Antioquia, Santander, and Magdalena. Without being exclusive to Negro or Negroid groups, it is among them that this belief is found with the greatest intensity and frequency.

175 The presence of Negroes in La Guajira is not due only to
563 racial mixing with the groups of mulattos of the coast but was initiated in the centuries of the Colony as can be seen from these notes taken from Father Julián: "Two evident and palpable reasons came to me: practical reasons which because of my zeal for the welfare of the Guajiro Nation and for the Monarchy I now express. The first is their provision and use of [100] firearms through their continual trade with foreigners; secondly, these same foreigners have brought in Negroes and Negresses, and these
[567] have mixed with the Indian men and women who have bought and kept them as slaves. The result is that not only is the number of people in La Guajira increased but so also is the number of terrible races of Mestizos, Mulattos, Zambos, etc., who united with the Guajiro will make this nation even more formidable and every-day more difficult to conquer." (59)

59. Julián, Antonio. La Perla de la América
[The Pearl of America], 2nd, XIV, 195.

754 Referring to this popular Santander belief, Juan de Dios Arias affirms: "In our territory, for example, there is a very general belief that certain persons have the evil eye, and if they should look fixedly and with evil intention at a child, in the course of a few days the latter will be covered with pimples and sore places which are difficult to cure. This evil influence is

[104 cont.]

226 Never again during our visit did we come across this type
751 of magic object, which leads us to believe that it does not be-
long to the Guajiro cultural whole, but that it is due rather to
the influence of the mulattoes of the coast who, as is well known,
are extremely superstitious.

756 Charms used to call spirits. The use of these charms, to
which we have referred on other occasions, is limited to shamans.
778 They use them to facilitate the arrival of their protector spirits
when they are in a curing trance or are carrying out any of the
functions related to their status. Up to the present we have not
arrived at a satisfactory explanation of their influence on the
spirits, but we might now bring together the few data we do have.
One of the female shamans who served us as informant and who
[776] came from the Sierra [de] Jarara possessed charms to attract her
spirits. She explained to us that as those spirits are assistants,
some to young shamans, some to old ones, the charms to facilitate
the arrival of their spirits are also of two classes: for young
shamans and the other for old ones.

[824] The charm is made from the leaf of a plant called in Guajiro
morõno, which is found in abundance on Itojoro Hill. A woman
expert in such articles makes them there [105] by grinding the
leaves of the plant to a paste and shaping this into a rounded form
which she keeps in a small bag of red thread. The larger ones
are reserved for the older shamans, and the others, combined with
some of the former, are for the younger.

778 The guará or gualé. The guará or gualé, difficult to find at
789 present, is a kind of idol made from solid gold or silver and of
[325] which only a few examples exist as they are no longer made. This
[532] small idol is an anthropomorphic representation in fetal position,
and it does not seem to be an autochthonous product of the
Guajiro as they themselves assert that these idols come from their
[173] distant ancestors, by which they mean the Arhuaco of the Sierra
Nevada de Santa Marta.

This fetish is known sometimes by the name Mareiwa, a
divinity or spirit similar to the idea of God but which appears to
be nothing else than the spirit of Rain, as we shall see further
ahead (cf. "Mareiwa and Wanurú").

Other Aspects of Magic

551 The name in magic. "The prohibition against uttering a
689 dead person's name generally is quite rigidly obeyed. Certain South American tribes consider that to pronounce the name of a dead person in the presence of his living relatives is to inflict on them a serious offense, and they apply to the offender a penalty no less rigorous than that assigned to a murder . . .," says Freud (63), and the Guajiro is typical in this respect. Let us see

63. Freud. Totem y Tabú.

one by one the rituals followed with respect to the dead person's name when a death occurs in their community.

[553] It is imperative that every other person who bears the same name as the deceased should change it. This is done to avoid pronouncing that name in the presence of any of the dead man's relatives, because if this should happen the relatives are entitled to present a claim for compensation payment for the offense. The family considers that by mentioning the name of their deceased relative, the offender has renewed all the painful sorrow which they suffered at his death.

551 This change of names among those who are namesakes of a dead man is made for life and extends geographically over all the zone inhabited by the dead man's relatives and causes the same person at times to have different names. It is, at least, one of the reasons.

[177] At the present time it is common among the natives for
797 every person to have three names: one Spanish, taken from the list of saints and given him by the priest at his baptism; a family nickname, by which he is generally known and which almost always refers to a distinctive physical or spiritual quality; and a third, intimate name, a secret for the majority of people and only known by its owner and some members of his family.

[69] The personal name of the individual should never be pronounced by anyone but his close relatives. Whoever should

536 [140 cont.]

796 moving along the ground. Headed by their leader they all continue to sing the song of the serpent, saying more or less the following: "I am the snake. I drag myself along the ground. [539] I do harm to no one. But he who dares to step on me because I am on the ground gets his punishment. I bite him and wound him. At times I kill him. He has to stay in bed and suffer for a long time as a punishment for having trodden on me and for thinking that I am helpless because I drag myself along the ground...." This song is repeated several times. [141]

IX

Mareiwa and Wanurú

or

Notions of Good and Evil

771 Through all the preceding chapters we have tried to explain clearly what constitutes the magic life of the Guajiro, which is almost the same as saying his spiritual life, and in passing we have mentioned the presence and activities of beings with higher powers than ordinary mortals, able to do good or evil according to which being intervenes in each particular case. We have thus touched on two fundamental ideas: good and evil.

776 Our interest is now concentrated in trying to elucidate the quality of these spirits, or supernatural beings. These can be 777 very seriously confused owing particularly to the influence of acculturation and more specifically to the pressure exerted by missionaries in their proselytizing function. So great is the misapplication of terms and concepts in this world of ideas that we might call the religious, that even the Guajiro mythology has been transformed by the use of terms which have a pejorative and 773 degrading effect on the Guajiro people (68).

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146 68. This statement is based on the legend which we obtained orally from

[141 cont.]

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● 177
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an Indian of the Nazaret locality relating to Mareiwa and the origin of humanity, in which are presented the beginnings of the different groups of mankind: natives and foreigners. The legend states that Mareiwa created mankind and gathered them together, inviting them to a banquet. Those who complied with the forms of social etiquette (shaking hands respectfully, sitting in the right place, behaving with composure, eating according to civilized rules, using knives and forks, washing hands, etc., were turned into aríjuna ("white," civilizado); those who misbehaved, who did not comply with these rituals of social etiquette, that is, those who showed they were Indians, were from that time classed as wayú ("Indians"). As can be seen, the Indian believes himself superior ~~to~~ to the White because of these details of social etiquette, of which he is partially or totally ignorant. [142]

177 The problem arises from the fact that those two notions of
771 good and evil, represented by two classes of spirits, benign and
776 malignant, have been changed for the Catholic or general Chris-
777 tian concepts of God and devil, concepts which the native, coming
more and more in contact with the Christian type of civilization
has gradually come to accept in the process of his conversion to
new ideas.

797 This affirmation is corroborated by various citations taken
from the writings of Catholic or Protestant missionaries as well
as from those of travelers or of ethnologists who have been in-
volved in the same confusion. To demonstrate the point we
transcribe several such cases.

[527] Father de Carcagente referring to the church at Manaure
says: "The Indians say to God 'Have pity upon us.' They know

[142 cont.]

776 although he sees everything.... Mareigua combines three main spirits and many subaltern ones inferior to Him. [143] Some of these spirits are masculine, some feminine.... An Indian sees that his crop is drying up for lack of water, and far from imploring Heaven for rain, he beats his drum every night and at dawn as if [62] 789 he expected the sound to break up the clouds, or he fires his gun with a similar hope.... Should one of his relatives become ill, he calls in the shaman so that he can with his remedies, his maraca, his tobacco or manilla spittle, and the instructions of his spirits, cure the sick man; instead of appealing to God and asking him to bring his relative back to health." (72)

72. Ibid., II, 65-67.

Jorge Isaacs, the famous Colombian novelist, in the second half of the past century, made an excursion under government authority to study La Guajira and other regions of the country, and he wrote in the report he presented: "Mareigua is the name by which the Guajiro designate God, or better said, the unbegotten one, immaterial force, master of creation." (73)

73. Isaacs. Estudio del Lenguaje Guajiro [Study of the Guajiro Language], 303.

Finally, the ethnologist Professor Hernández de Alba, as a result of his expedition to the peninsula says: "Mareigua. All that is good for the Guajiro: rain, abundance, life, protection, the world in which he lives, all come from Mareigua, the one and only God, always good, never evil...." (74)

74. Hernández de Alba. Etnología Guajira [Guajiro Ethnology], 49-50.

777 The quotations which we have cited lead us to the belief by 776 the Guajiro in an all-powerful god, unique and universal. This

[143 cont.]

177 seems to be true, in a certain way, for those who are imbued with
776 Christian religious practices, because when they refer to our God,
to Jesus Christ, they call him Mareiwa. But at the bottom of their
minds, in our opinion, there is some distinction which is precisely
what we shall try to explain.

753 When we spoke of the shaman, we referred extensively to
775 his protector spirits, the real healers of sickness, of whom the
shaman is no more than an intermediary. Naturally, we also
spoke, in that chapter and in the one relating to sickness, of the
evil spirits, the malignant ones, the cause of the trouble, known
by the generic name of wanurú, and we explained how the first
are, in general, the spirits of dead shamans who have disappeared
but continue to exercise their functions for the benefit of the
community, while the wanurú are also spirits of dead people who
satisfy their personal vengeance, revenge themselves for disre-
spect shown them in their status after death, or are simply danger-
ous because of the circumstances of their death, as in the case of
suicides. [144]

776 In addition to the spirits of sickness and death, there is
another named yo-ru-já, difficult to describe and whose functions
are difficult to delineate. We only know that he is magnificently
[77] malevolent and that it is he, the complete opposite of Mareiwa
(God) that has been named "demon" or "devil" by missionaries,
writers, etc.

Regarding the previous statement, we have several quota-
tions that confirm it: "Yoluhá is the demon in the simple Guajiro
theogony. As with god, it is scarcely a concept, a word that
represents the forces of destruction and, at the same time, of
power, since it is even used by the shaman when he is foretelling
the future. "What does the devil say (Jamúseneik Yolujá)?" is
the question the diviner asks. The Guajiro demon is not, there-
fore, like the Christian devil, the opposite of God, because in
addition to wickedness and destruction it also embraces the con-
cept of power and divination." (75)

[148 cont.]

775 4. Also like the wanurú, he takes on special forms of dress, such as that of a "king," an aríjuna (civilizado), and an Indian. At times flames leap from his eyes and mouth (possibly acculturation from Catholic legends about the devil).

• [77] 5. There are other beliefs that refer to him, such as the [225] one that states that when during the night a woman should find a praying mantis [mantis religiosa] she should hurriedly throw some cotton seeds and salt on the fire in order that with the flame produced when these catch fire, the malignant spirit, or yorujá, who brings the mantis with him will be frightened away. There is a similarity in this belief to the one that prescribes placing horses' skulls around to frighten the wanurú away from the vicinity of habitations.

. . .

776 In summary we would say that the spirits of good are represented by Mareiwa and by a series of other protector spirits, 775 especially those of shamans, which are no other than those of dead curers. Their standing or status depends on that which they [554] had in life, the greater their prestige as curers in this world, [149] the more important will be their position in the next as benevolent spirits. The spirits of evil are represented by dead persons and are of different degrees of danger according to the characteristics of their death. It is presumable that those called yorujá, resembling the devil, the greatest incarnation of evil as an abstract idea, are spirits of the dead of a greater degree of wickedness, while the wanurú, connected almost exclusively with sickness, are spirits of dead persons of a lesser degree of evil.

Finally, the differences between the two categories of spirits — benevolent and malevolent — are of two classes: 1) of a quantitative character, according to their power to do good or evil respectively; 2) of a formal character, referring to the apparition of evil spirits in various bodily forms, and the absence of such forms for good spirits. [151] [Page 150 is blank.]

177 Magic shows itself to be one of the strongest institutions
 771 of Guajiro culture despite the fact that, as we have shown
 789 throughout this study, it is gradually losing its importance in
 proportion to the lowering of the shaman's prestige as the spiritual
 leader of the group. This is due to the already mentioned fac-
 tors of proselytizing and acculturation on a rising scale, brought
 about by the influence of a continually increasing number of
civilizado elements in the peninsula, as well as by the conse-
 quences of the acculturation experienced by the members of the
 society. However, it is magic that still dominates many of the
 aspects of the native's daily life, not to say the greater part,
 and it is this that we are trying to synthesize and briefly ex-
 plain in this chapter.

132 1. Economy. The Guajiro's life, as we saw in the Intro-
 182 duction is strictly dependent on the tyrannically dominating cli-
 771 mate, given the conditions of the peninsula where this commun-
 789 ity lives, relying as they do on the seasonal fluctuations of rains
 to which they have adapted their system of agriculture and stock
 grazing, essential sources of their economy. As the people's
 livelihood directly depends on these, the Guajiro, lacking the
 higher techniques of irrigation and water conservation, puts his
 hope of survival in methods of magic, whether they be personal,
 collective, or directly exercised by the curer-magician of the
 community. These are no other than the exorcisms carried out
 by the latter to attract the rains in the long summers by invoking
 his protector spirits and especially Mareiwa, the personification
 of good and of rain; or the adoration and ceremonies in honor
 of the iguana carried out by private individuals with the same
 end in view; or, in short, all the methods of magic we have
 enumerated in connection with the natural phenomenon of rain.

[241] Also in respect to the economy we must remember the
 462 presence of women when the sowing of crops is done, which
 establishes a division of work by sex based on the magic associa-
 tion of the transmission of feminine fecundity to the seeds.

77 [152] Moreover, faced with the new phenomenon of stock
 238 grazing, the native has adapted his magic methods to this, im-
 789 posing the same or similar treatments used for the members of the

[152 cont.]

177 community, especially in cases of illness and pestilences, as can
233 be seen in the section "Shamanistic treatment of animals" in
789 Chapter II. If, on one hand, stock grazing partly changed some
of the social system related to magic, on the other hand, at the
same time it has also felt the influence of this institution to the
point of acquiring its own characteristics which differentiate it
from other systems of stock grazing, which follow, in general,
the lines laid down by the Spanish colonists. Magic is sui generis
and plays its part today, as the oldest institution can, in
Guajiro culture.

789 Moreover, not only in the collective sense but in the in-
dividual, the action of magic on the economy shows itself very
clearly in the charm [contra] to make oneself rich, which we
have described in detail in Chapter VI and which, as is logical
within the Guajiro social dynamic, is connected to such im-
portant social matters as status, as we shall see later.

[776] In the chapter which we have called "Magic as the Origin
of the Theater in La Guajira," we may also see the effectiveness
of magic in the private economy, since the owner of a piece of
cultivated land is the one who organizes at his own expense the
dance and fiesta given to attract the blessing of the good spirits,
of Mareiwa on the crops, which require sufficient rain and cer-
tain climatic conditions to ripen. So great is their confidence
that they believe that the more solemn the ceremony of the
Dance of the Kid, the more benefit will be received from the
spirits they invoke and fete, and the greater the probability of
success for the harvest.

192 2. Society. Guajiro society, as we have said, has trans-
619 ferred a great part of the responsibility for its survival and
789 stability to magic and has a tranquil confidence in it, convinced
of its effectiveness and holding firmly to an institutional determin-
ism which only now is beginning to break down fundamentally.
The cultural institution of magic represents to the individual
Guajiro a system of life, thought, and belief which unites him to
his group as much as does the consanguineous tie and the estab-
lished clan system. Magic is the general and generalized institu-
tion, essentially independent of the characteristic social divisions

[155 cont.]

182 individual or of the dead, in the aspect which we have called
626 "Omens and Augural Birds," in the behavior followed by individ-
789 uals who wish to call up a breeze during a windless calm at sea
or to send away eclipses and lightning which, according to their
belief, are malevolent.

* * *

789 A very interesting aspect of magic is its use for and against
595 some of the cultural institutions and their institutionalized pat-
terns; for example, the use of love charms and the compliance
with certain norms after the period of seclusion accompanying
the ceremonies at the time of a young woman's initiation. Her
aim is to fight against polygamy, with a view either to obtain-
ing predominance over other wives or, better, to prevent the man
who has acquired her for his wife from acquiring more women with
whom she would have to share his life. Possibly due to the influ-
ence of acculturation, there is a tendency toward monogamy on
the part of the women. The men, however, tend toward polygamy
[554] for prestige, since for it they must have a good economical posi-
tion, as the price of women is high, increasingly so the greater
their social position.

751 [156] Another institution that we see directly affected by
771 magic is this same initiation of young women. We saw how
881 the death of a first-born child required a series of ceremonies
to prevent future children dying at birth, one after the other,
and we stated that one of the principal ceremonies consisted in
the observance of certain norms which bring to mind very clearly
the initiation of the young mother. Their idea would seem to
be that one of the causes of the death of the first-born was the
deficient carrying out of the magic-biological-social ceremonial
to which the girl must submit to prepare for her life as an adult.

764 Also the norms relating to the dead and the belief in a
775 life beyond the grave rest almost exclusively on magic, and
771 through it their prestige and their functioning are kept up. Magic
626 is also the cause of the fear and respect which relatives and friends
show to their dead, and it is magic which also promotes all the
ceremonial rites that are celebrated in this connection.

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671 tween law and custom in Guajiro society by a variety of illustrations. One of them said in effect:

574 If a cacique visits me and I fail to kill a sheep in honor of his visit
and to feast him in accordance with the dignity of his rank and my
626 wealth, I have broken a custom of my people. However, though I
671 offend him by such negligence my guest may take no action to
redress the wrong other than to inflict the same discourtesy on me if
the opportunity should arise. He may seek neither redress in
violence nor composition in payment. My only punishment may
be the acquisition of a bad name among my people.

586 But if I visit one of my wives at her rancho and she fails to kill a
671 sheep from her own flocks to feast me, refuses me her person, neglects
to supply me with hammocks, saddle-bags, and other articles made
684 by women, or refuses me shelter, she will have broken a 'law'; that
is, she will have broken the marriage contract. In this case I may
demand from her and her family payment or a divorce. In the
latter case her family would have to return to me the bride-price
plus any increase in the herds but less an amount considered fair for
my having exercised sexual privileges over her, though I may demand
even this if she marries again. In case her family refuses to adjust
[626] the matter in accordance with our law I may appeal to my family for
help in obtaining my just rights. I should be justified in having
recourse to violence. However, the law is so well understood that
it would not be necessary to resort to such drastic measures generally.³

671 These informants were acquainted to some extent with
[115] Colombian and Venezuelan laws and were attempting, no
[177] doubt, to classify their own customs in accordance with
European practices. Nevertheless it is an indication that in
their minds there does exist a class of offenses for which one
may seek composition even through violence, and a class that
is in the category of merely moral obligations though investi-
gators may not always draw an equally fine distinction.
[114] Simons, for example, in discussing Guajiro law speaks of injury
to oneself as giving rise to a legal obligation for composition.
574 My informants, on the contrary, distinguished it from that
626 class of wrongful acts. If a man cuts himself, his father and
672 father's relatives receive an expiatory offering. Had one of
602 my informants, the son of a rich cacique, cut himself he would
have given a small barrel of rum and five or more sheep to his

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demetery, a site chosen in some solitary arid spot, and surrounded by 764
walls of cacti. At the death of Salvador, a Pushaina from Arroyo Cardon,
130 fat oxen were killed, and the hides did not pay for the liquor
drunk. Two of the same family meeting for the first time after the 765
death of a relation, must squat down on their hands in front of each other,
and sob and weep, for at least a quarter of an hour, the louder the better.

The Indians are very punctilious in saluting. Calling at a rancho, 574
visitors must wait until spoken to, if this is not done soon, it is evident
they are not welcome, so ride away. The words used never seem to be
the same. The most frequent are "Intiahi-pia" (you have come), or
"Elguare pia" (so you have arrived). In eating and drinking the Indians
are extremely cleanly. The principals all eat separately; receiving 264
their allowance in an earthenware dish, *posé*, with a gourd spoon, *pushi*. 415
The remains, with an addition, serve for the lower members of the
family. Water is invariably given after, to wash the mouth and fingers.
Even if a drink of milk is taken, a little water is tendered after. As to
their hospitality, it has, I believe, been rather exaggerated. There is
no doubt that the Goajiro is more hospitable than the Arhuaco of the
Sierra Nevada, but then he is also far more cunning and diplomatic, and
his hospitality is a mere question of self-interest. He will willingly 431
give a sheep or a goat as a present, provided there is a chance of claiming
an ox in return. He is chivalrous in his donations. When he does
give a sheep, it is a fat one, his best, and given whole, without reserve,
skin and all. If eating, on the arrival of a stranger, he may offer food
to him, but certainly will give if requested, as is the custom, always
begging. One thing a guest may rely upon receiving in a rancho is a
hammock, even if the owner has to sleep on the ground. Lastly, among 551
curious customs, is that of parents assuming the names of their
children with the prefix *sushi* or *sushi* if the father, and *si* or *si* if the
mother. Thus the father of Juan would call himself "Nuashijuan,"
or if a daughter, "Sushijuana." The mother of Juan would be called
"Nijuan," and if a daughter, "Sijuana."

The dress of the Goajiros is extremely simple, and probably similar 291
to his savage luxury of three centuries ago, when Alfinger devastated
the land, except that his own quiet blacks and browns—for he is cunning 346
in the art of dyeing—have given way to the gorgeous blues, reds, and 171
yellows of European wool. His every day working costume is simply
a strip of cloth from three inches wide upwards, called *esichea*.
When paying visits, receiving company, or travelling, he dons his best
—a large loincloth with many folds, and the home-woven mantle *ahé*,
with a magnificent sash, *si-ira*. The mantle is managed with
wonderful elegance, now letting it fall about him in voluptuous folds, or
dropping it from his shoulders, and tucking it into his immense sash,
where his arrows are carried. The hair, which is jet black, thick, and 302
cut short, is kept back in a very æsthetic style by a ring or crown, 291

302 called *yara* if made of plaited straw, and *capannas* if made of wool,
 291 with large tassel (worn behind). The two can be combined and adorned
 with a couple of feathers in front. When made entirely of feathers, it
 becomes *torówa*. An Indian's toilet would not be complete without
 [293] a *kapiquito*, a piece of leather fastened round the left wrist by a twist
 of wool to receive the recoil of the bow-string when shooting. Paint is
 302 common to both sexes, and in excess. They assert that it saves their
 complexions from the sun. The last thing an Indian does, on mounting
 horse for the day's journey, is to call for the powder-box, and plentifully
 besprinkle his face. The powders *mapuatepo* or *marua* are rotten wood;
 [386] *guannapai*, a black stain from a wild nut; and *parisa*, very popular among
 the fairer sex, is the colour extracted from a leaf and mixed with fat.

The woman's dress is invariably, at present, made from foreign cotton,
 291 and is a plain sack with a hole for the head and two others for the arms.
 [177] With the wind it blows out and makes her look like a balloon. The
 white cotton is dyed black with *divi-divi*, or yellowish-brown with *mora*
 [386] (yellow wood), or reddish-brown with the suckers of mangroves. The
 Indians are exceptionally clean and nice in their dress, and, however
 [515] poor, keep a reserve suit for state occasions. Women alone wear the
 301 *pána* and the *sirapo*. The *pána* are like a pair of braces; long strings
 of beads passing over each shoulder to cross each other on the breast
 and back, held in position at the waist by the *sirapo*, a sort of sash or
 belt made of beads likewise. Small strings a few ounces in weight are
 placed on the female child a few months after birth, and gradually
 increased, according to the strength of the child and the purse of the
 parents. *Pánas* are made with any beads except black, a red variety
 with white eye (*tsachón*) preferred, and weigh from 2 to 10 lbs. With
 straps any coloured bead will do, *pink* or black ones the rule, and they
 weigh from 1 to 10 lbs. A married woman may wear the *pána* until
 [844] her first confinement, when it is laid aside. Poor Indians who cannot
 afford beads for the *pána* make it of cotton dyed black and braided.
 Among the many necklaces, *tumas* are the most valuable. These curious
 [172] perforated stones are only found in the graves of prehistoric races, both
 in the peninsula itself and the Sierra Nevada. There are many varieties.
 The round ones varying in size from a large marble to a pea are *támas*
 (a name generalised by the Spaniards); those in shape of small char-
 mellels are *amurud*; the pear-shaped, according as they are long or
 dumpy, *perigua*, and *guariratsya*; the bugle is *paraurin*, &c. Mine-
 ralogically they are bits of red jasper, cornelian, and reddish malonyx.
 Their value depends upon the intensity of red and size. A large one at
 [435] present is worth a head of cattle; a necklace has from 15 to 30, varying
 in size. Bracelets are as varied and in as much profusion as necklaces;
 they are called *áhpasa*, from *ahapo*, the hand. On the feet they also
 wear strings of cornelians and beads. They have two names, the aristo-
 cratic *cushikander* and the common *guarikena*.

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In weapons the Goajiro uses the old-fashioned bow and arrow, along with the latest breech-loading rifle. He never strolls ten yards from the rancho without his arrows stuck in his ash and the inseparable bow in his hand. Arrows are of three classes: bolts for killing birds and lizards, *hata*, having a nail or piece of hard wood for a head neatly covered with wax; arrows proper, for killing game and war, *siguarrai*, with iron heads made from old knives filed and worked into shape; and thirdly the terrible poisoned rays, *aimari*: these are an ordinary arrow-shaft, with two inches of the bony weapon of the sting-ray (*querana*) loosely fastened to the end, well covered with poison. To prevent accidents, each head is covered by a cane sheath. The poison is putrefied animal matter—toms, snakes, and other reptiles allowed to putrefy and boiled down. When newly done the poison is said to be weak, the same when too old, so the arrows have to be re-dipped at stated intervals (about nine months). Death subvenes from three to twelve days afterwards, a sort of blood-poisoning, and is tolerably certain if the ray-bone has not been got out (a most difficult operation) and the wound well cauterised with a red-hot nail. The Cocinas of Yuripicho are reputed the best makers, and enjoy a sort of monopoly. A bunch of twenty-four arrows is sold by them for a dram out of cotton (eight yards. None of the arrows are feathered; the shafts are made from cane, reeds, and also solid wood. As to firearms the Indian prefers the old "Crown" or "Tower" flintlock (*carrabuso*) to the Remington rifle, on account of the uncertainty of getting cartridges. The American flintlock (*carrabuso cayota-punahana*) is also much liked.

The principal industries among the Goajiras are collecting *divi-divi*, and salt, and breeding horses, mules, donkeys, cattle, and goats, with the accompanying sale of hides. Their animals are celebrated in the neighbouring provinces for being docile, having been all brought up as it were by hand, for the Indian spares neither time nor trouble on his flocks.

With regard to the language, a small grammar was published in 1878 by Rafael Chelaton. Unfortunately it was printed in Paris, while the author was in America, and is replete with errors in consequence. The language is a much richer one than is generally supposed, and taken as a whole has a euphonious, pleasing effect on the ear, much more so than the neighbouring Arhuaco. I have no space here to dwell upon its beauties, but cannot dismiss the subject without giving the following three examples of much-used words:—

Achinga, a name.

Tachinga, my name.

Pachinga, your name.

Nichinga, his name.

Nuchinga, her name.

Ita, a cup (gourd).

Te-ita-in, my cup.

Pi-ita-in, your cup.

Ni-ita-in, his cup.

Ni-ita-in, her cup.

Yara, a headress.

Tokiara, my headress.

Pikiara, your headress.

Nikiara, his headress.

Nikiara, her headress.

7: Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957

SC13 Goajiro SC13

291

531

● 177

516



*Indian women in the national dress of today with large woollen pompons
on their sandals*

[P. 2]

[P. 1 contains no text which is not reproduced
elsewhere]

123 musical bow. It was quite small. He held one end between
 534 his lips and struck the strings with a stick. If the reed-flute
 was introduced by the Moors in those early days, the
 musical bow must have come with negro slaves. Stringed
 instruments were not known in South America before the
 arrival of the white man. The Indians knew nothing of all
 197 that, but neither of these two originally foreign instruments
 were used in their rites, which supports the conclusion that
 they were introduced late.

123 The concert was interrupted by the women announcing
 262 that a meal awaited us. This began with the oily, somewhat
 264 nauseous berries which the Creoles call olives. We did not
 like their taste and never did more than just sample them.
 We had also heard that they might be injurious. The main
 dish—one could almost say, naturally—consisted of boiled
 dried goat's meat, the standard fare in the peninsula, and
 we were given water that also tasted of goat—we preferred
 not to know why.

251 In Guajira it is possible to dry meat in the sun without
 salting it, providing you cut it in strips and remove all
 bone. In moister parts of the Caribbean countries meat has
 to be properly salted before it can be preserved by drying,
 but in the dry air of Guajira that can be dispensed with.
 Salt, too, is a thing of which they have more than enough.

123 Having four young men present, I thought I would
 526 arrange a competition for marksmanship with bow and
 arrow and with a sling. The prizes were an empty biscuit
 tin, a handkerchief and a needle. These were all desirable
 things and the contestants did their best. The fourth
 received a Swedish ten öre piece as consolation prize.

411 I took the opportunity to take a closer look at their
 weapons. The bows were powerful and had round sections;
 the arrows had iron heads shaped like a lancet. An old man
 said that in the old days the heads used to be made of bam-
 boo. Some of the arrows, those intended for smaller birds,
 had blunt points made of wood or wax. The quarry was
 meant to be stunned by the force of the impact. They
 showed us arrows equipped with cross-pieces to prevent
 them becoming lost when used in the scrub. The cross-

342 those we had left, but just as simple. Inside were hammocks
 [352] slung this way and that. Along the walls were carrying-nets
 [415] filled with things, and earthenware vessels lay scattered
 about the floor of hard-trodden sand. Some of these vessels
 were grey, others reddish-brown, some had necks and
 • [177] handles. One was an obvious imitation of a Dutch liqueur
 jar. It was not far to Puerto Estrella, to which schooners
 from the Dutch islands came.

415 Most of the earthenware vessels had red decoration.
 531 Some, with wavering lines, were obviously the work of the
 oldest of the women, who was frail and almost blind; but
 there was no fault in the shape of the vessel. The woven
 286 cloths were hung up in a special shelter. The warp hung
 [177] vertical and ran like an endless belt over an upper and a
 lower pole. Several related tribes, members of the Aruak
 family, use the same method. When the cloth is finished,
 it forms a ring, and is then cut up.

They were working on a man's belt or sash. The every-
 day belt was only a couple of inches wide, but sashes in-
 tended for more solemn occasions were some eighteen
 inches broad and very colourful. They used red, yellow,
 black and white yarn and the pattern was most interesting.
 Ceremonial cloaks are also woven for the men, just as
 colourful as the sashes, but, to my sorrow, I was never able
 to acquire a really fine specimen. They were simply too
 [764] expensive. The rich chiefs collected them, but custom
 [627] decreed that they must be wrapped in all their cloaks when
 356 they died, which meant that none were inherited. The men's
 everyday cloaks I have already described; they pulled them
 291 on and then twisted them so that their chest was bared.
 The women's dress was considerably more Spartan: it was
 a wide tunic, made like a sack with holes for the head and
 [386] arms, and dyed black with divi-divi or brown with stuff
 from some other plant. Their loin-cloth only became visible
 when they were working in the shade or indoors and
 removed their tunics. It too was black or undyed. They
 themselves thought that there was no call to use a nice
 patterned cloth for underclothes. Little girls often had
 patterned loin-cloths, but then they did not wear tunics.

796 great ring and several of them were wiping their mouths in evident satisfaction—presumably having just been regaled with some drink.

796 The drum thundered a long time in vain before a young
535 Indian stepped into the ring, removed his cloak and sandals and began to walk round in a circle—a challenge to the members of the fair sex.

Almost at once a girl appeared in the ring; removed her sandals and held her tunic spread wide with her hands. The two then began dancing: he in front, she a few yards behind. Suddenly the man gave a shout and the tempo increased. Turning swiftly the girl came sweeping down towards the man who danced away, moving backwards. She must try to get close enough to tramp on his feet and make him fall, but she must not barge him. If she managed to make her partner fall, there was great jubilation, and then a new couple took the stage. Otherwise, the girl would probably challenge her partner to a few more turns, while he answered contemptuously:

'Fetch your little sister.' (Inferring that she would manage better.)

In this way a dance continues without interruption, couple following couple. It could go on for weeks.

[17] The well-bred Indian considers the chichamaya the only suitable dance. The monks also approved of it, since it was perfectly decent, the two dancers remaining apart the whole time. The dance is not genuinely Indian, containing both Spanish and African features, but even in its present form it retains its religious-magical significance and is part of the ritual used in certain family ceremonies and on other important occasions.

796 The dance of the kid is a pure folk dance. It is really a
786 whole complex of games, dances and typical fertility rites.

The good families do not allow their daughters to attend them. The law's strict sexual prohibition does not apply to those taking part in the dance of the kid, who enjoy an otherwise forbidden erotic licence. This is not approved of by the well-to-do, who still hold by the rule that a bride should be a virgin, since it can have an effect on the bride-price.

INNOCENCE AND THE FERTILITY DANCE 119

On two occasions I went out with some hunters who had 778
 hunting *contras*. Two had talismans for hares; these were 224
 small pellets fastened to the leather shield that protects the 789
 arm against the bow string. The pellets were shaped like
 rabbit's excrement and contained a herb the leaves of which
 resembled rabbit's ears and which the so-called rabbits
 were fond of! Another man had a deer *contra* prepared
 from a creeper. It resembled deer's droppings.

The hunters were quite convinced that the *contra* would
 give them good hunting, and that by its power their game
 would be unable to escape them. Thus those *contra* were
 doubly effective. On neither occasion, however, did we get
 anything, much to the consternation of the hunters. I think
 they assumed that my presence had prevented the charms
 working, and they were astounded when I bought them.

Of other talismans there was one intended to help its 778
 owner win races. This consisted of some rattling fruits to 789
 tie beside the horse's ear. There was a *contra* for warriors
 called *rania*, which gave its bearer courage and made him
 invulnerable. Another, which was very expensive, was said
 to give the possessor luck in business and gradually make
 him rich. Having become rich, he could then purchase the
 most expensive charm of all, that which would bring him
 respect and power. This latter was strictly personal: an
 outsider could be harmed by seeing it, especially a thief, and
 it was not effective except in the hands of its rightful
 owner. It was contained inside several small bags, one
 within the other, and what was inside the innermost one was
 known only to the *plache* who prepared it. In the talisman
 that brought wealth there were supposed to be links of gold,
 the power of which lay in the spells spoken over them.
 Similarly pearls and little figures made of coconut over
 which the wise women had spoken spells served as amulets. [54]
 Amongst other things they protect the wearer against the [17]
 evil eye, belief in which the Indians had evidently adopted [532]
 from the Spanish-Moorish superstitions of their conquerors.
 You can find too the small carved hands that are so typically
 Moorish, and the most powerful means of averting the evil
 eye. Yet another is more in the negro style. The skulls of

175 During the Colonial Period, the *Goajiro* were hostile toward the Span-
iards. After 1830, however, as a result of better treatment from the Whites,
thanks in part to the efforts of Juan MacPherson, they become more
friendly. Present authorities in the *Goajiro* region merely regulate frontier
traffic.

797 The attempts by the Capuchin Fathers to alter their ways of life have
been unsuccessful. Except for the thin Catholic veneer, noticeable in
baptismal rites and Spanish names, *Goajiro* social life seems to have been
little affected by centuries of contact with Hispanic culture. Foreign in-
fluence is more apparent materially in iron implements, utensils, guns,
textiles, and ornaments. All the domestic animals are of Spanish origin.

161 As a result of tuberculosis, smallpox, and venereal disease, the *Goajiro*
are gradually dying out, and the population estimates found in the litera-
ture have become smaller and smaller, the most recent indicating a scant
18,000.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

147 The *Goajiro* are usually described as aggressive and untrustworthy, of
medium or small stature (cf. J. A. Mason, 1926, pp. 39, 52), copper
colored, with jet-black hair, dark eyes rather obliquely set, a broad and
blunt nose, and a large mouth (pl. 72, bottom, right). Within the tribes
there are physical differences which seem to correspond with social status,
the lower classes being smaller and more Indian in appearance, while
those of higher rank are more often of a greater stature, with curlier hair
and larger noses.

LANGUAGE

197 The *Goajiro* language belongs to the *Arawakan* family. There is, how-
ever, no good analysis of it. A grammar, "replete with errors" according
to Simons, was published by Rafael Caledon in 1878. Various word lists
have been published from time to time.

CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 Farming.—The *Goajiro* have a poor opinion of agriculture, and only
the poorer sibs practice it. The one fertile part of the peninsula is near
Punta Espada. Here the land is well cultivated, and plantains, maguey,
onions, coca, sugarcane, and grain are grown. Tobacco, bananas, maize,
gourds, manioc, sweetpotatoes, millet, beans, and watermelons also are
raised. Those who own cattle grow only small patches of quick-maturing
corn for the purpose of making chicha beer.

22 Hunting, fishing, and gathering.—Hunting, fishing, and gathering
occupy a minor place. Deer, armadillos, land tortoises, and rabbits are

726 on equal terms. He then approached the enemy from the left while making quick movements, jumps, and turns, with his legs apart and his knees bent. More recently, according to Ernst (1887 c), war is not declared, attempts being made to take the enemy by surprise.

[797] Wars last indefinitely, sometimes being broken by a peace brought about by an influential "civilizado" or the Capuchin monks, the latter sometimes paying the retribution demanded out of their own pockets.

579 Some tribes, such as the *Cosina* of Serrania Cosina (actually a conglomeration of outcastes rather than a sib), make their living almost entirely by robbery and pillage, destroying houses, stealing cattle, and killing or enslaving their enemies.

LIFE CYCLE

843 Birth and childhood.—During pregnancy a woman continues to do her heavy work up to the very hour of delivery. At childbirth, the shaman

844 pronounces various spells over the patient and applies poultices made of
[156] dried flowers, roots, etc. A large, heavy stone placed over the womb and vigorous massaging bring about the birth. If the placenta is not soon expelled, the woman drinks a medicine concocted by the medicine man.

As soon as the child is safely delivered the father serves rum and chicha to all his relatives. If the pains of childbirth appear when the sib is
[484] on the march, the woman mounts and rides ahead so that when the sib catches up the event is practically over. The husband cuts the cord with his machete and cauterizes its ends with a glowing ember. The woman

[854] then continues on the march with the child in a sling on her back. When the permanent camp is reached she washes herself and the child.

851 Baptism is a Christian ceremony which the *Goajiro* have adopted, and
551 most of the Indians are called by Spanish names, as their real names may
177 not be mentioned. Teknonymy is practiced; a parent is addressed by its child's name plus a prefix, nushi or sushi for the father, ni or si for the mother. Thus, a father may be called Nushijuan after a son or Sushijuana after a daughter.

857 At 6 or 7, girls learn to grind salt, pick cotton, and tend the smaller
869 animals; the boys imitate their fathers.

855 Parents are said to show little affection for their children, sometimes
[435] selling them at Sinamaica. They receive \$10 or \$15 for a child of 8 or 9 years. The purchaser becomes the child's guardian, teaches him the Catholic faith, and keeps him until he is 17 years old. These children
[736] rarely return home. Abandoned children are taken to the San Antonio
797 orphanage, where the girls continue to wear their *Goajiro* dress, but the boys are put into jackets and pants.

881 Girls' puberty.—At her first menstruation a girl is isolated in a small dark hut and stripped of all her ornaments. She lies in a hammock, sometimes hoisted near the roof. For the first 2 days she drinks no

121 the individual who was to provide the raw material for this article. This is more or less a biography of the man who was at the same time guide, interpreter, and driver for the author and with whom extensive conversations, both formal and informal, took place.²

177 Guajiro culture, like most native cultures in the New World, has suffered great acculturation due to the impact with European ways of life. Some of these cultures have been more resistant to change than others; and within one culture, certain aspects have remained closer to the traditional forms than have others. In Guajiro culture, it is perhaps the social organization, with all of its ramifications, that has resisted recent acculturation more than the other aspects of the culture. We know very little
174
1233 of the pre-cattle culture of the Guajiro and even Juan de Castellanos, writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century, describes them as having numerous herds of domestic animals.

554 Nowhere in the literature on the Guajiros is there an example of status having been acquired outside the traditional way and the present writer, in his two field trips to the region, has found only the case here described.

619 As it is not the purpose of this article to give a full description
614 of the social organization of the Guajiro, it will be sufficient to state that the tribe is divided into some twenty-five matrilineal clans, of which about eleven are large and rather powerful in their socio-economic aspects, and the rest—due mainly to the fact of having a small number of members—are weak, and
428 relatively unimportant. Inheritance is along the mother's line, an individual acquiring property from his maternal uncle. The
604 avunculate in all its social and economic aspects, is a very important institution (Santa Cruz, 1941).

614 Traditionally the clans are exogamous with incest taboos and
582 punishments for those who break them. This exogamic characteristic of the clan is apparently disappearing, as several cases of endogamous unions were found among the Guajiro living in the outskirts of the city of Maracaibo. No endogamous marriages, however, were found in the Guajiro proper by the present writer, although Gregorio Hernandez de Alba (1936) has

² Proper names, especially of the subject, have all been disguised in some way, so as to spare personal feelings.

159 Venezuelan Guajiro. As his wealth grew so did his prestige.
 554 About twenty years ago the then leader of the Uriana clan died
 556 leaving no heirs, as he had no brothers and no direct nephews.
 622 Guajiro tradition establishes that, if upon the death of a clan
 leader and wealthy man there are no close heirs, even though
 [408] there be distant ones, a council of elders (informally chosen
 [23] among the oldest and more respected men of the clan) will
 meet and select the individual who shall take over not only the
 leadership of the clan but the wealth of the deceased as well.
 These cases are very infrequent (actually the writer could only
 find, in the memory of the oldest men, two instances of a
 council of elders meeting to select a leader; one is the case men-
 tioned in this article, and the other occurred among the Epicýú
 clan, in Colombia, about fifty or sixty years ago). Fernandez
 [55] now confesses, quite candidly, that at the time of the meeting
 of the council of elders, he distributed a number of gifts among
 them, thus succeeding in having them select him as clan leader
 and heir to the wealth of the dead chief.

• 179 It is interesting to note—and it shows how much acculturation
 192 Guajiro culture has undergone with the assimilation of the cattle
 complex—that the true Guajiro term for leader or chief (which
 also means “old man”) *alat’laa* is almost all but forgotten and
 practically never used, having been substituted by the word
to’olo a corruption of the Spanish word *toro* meaning BULL.
 [194] (Stops are not glottal, but simple stoppage of the sound to be
 renewed with the coming vowel. Phonetic transcription have fol-
 lowed those given by Dr. Martha Hilderbrand’s work on the
 Guajiro language published by the Comisión Indigenista, Vene-
 zuela, in 1958).

622 The role of Fernandez as leader of the Uriana clan is an
 627 exact replica of Silva’s. He acts as advisor, settles disputes, makes
 arrangements for the payments of torts, bride-prices, etc. His day
 is fully as busy as that of Silva and he attends to all these mat-
 ters besides his personal affairs.

554 Here we have, then, the two traditional ways of acquiring
 status in Guajiro society that the present writer has been able
 to investigate; one through inheritance, as in the case of Panchito
 Silva; and the other, through selection by a council of elders,
 as in the case of José de la Rosa Fernandez. It is doubtful that

/537 cont. /

171 around the world simultaneously
231 with the domestic animals them-
422 selves.

614 The branding described was probably learned by the
212 Indians from the Spaniards themselves, simultaneously with
231 the adoption of the first European domestic animals, and
422 has been retained since then. It is all the more surprising
● 177 that the branding iron (hierro) appears in an old myth which
614 for its part clearly states where the customary individual
212 clan-signs came from. The following version (according to
723 V. Gutiérrez, p. 168) is common in the northern part of the
peninsula:

Not far from Nazareth (10) a hill rises behind Itojoro.

[799]
[131]

10. This post lies only several
kilometers south of Puerto Estrella
and is actually a small Catholic
mission station. Cf. Stutzer,
pp. 131 ff., and Barranquilla,
pp. 151 ff.

Here, under an oil tree, Mareiwa (11) came into the world.

776
114

11. That is the spelling of this
mythological name that I felt to
be correct, as did V. Gutiérrez
(p. 168). Chaves (1946, p. 307)
explains in the myth concerning
"Las Serranías de la Guajira,"
among other things: "Mareiagua
[13] one of the principal deities
of the Guajiro people, who with
his supernatural power converts
persons into hills, separates the

/540 cont./

614 The continued influencing through a series of generations,
 614 even though nevertheless brief, by Spanish culture and the
 777 spirit of modern times has finally also altered the primitive
 178 judgment and feeling of these Indians and has strengthened in
 them the pride to assert themselves now as "enlightened."
 It therefore need not be surprising that today they laugh in
 the face of a foreign visitor when the latter poses his questions
 as though he himself regarded a blood descent of the clan
 members from their totem animal as established and factual.

[12] The above-mentioned Cacique Briscol (15) even whispered

15. This pure-blooded, intelligent,
 and experienced Indian refers several
 times to the clans of his Guajiro
 people in his well-written story.

disrespectfully in my ear: "You must not suppose that we
 think of an animal when we present the totem as our ancestor.
 Every ancestor was as human as we are; only at the very be-
 ginning was he just like the totem that each clan has had
 since then. Our forefathers respected their totem animal more
 than we do today; they neither persecuted it nor ate its flesh.
 Now the habits of our ancestors are disappearing among us,
 one after another. There are now only sixteen independent

614 'castas'; their number was formerly double that." V. Gutiérrez
 773 herself agreed with Briscol's interpretation when she presented
 114 the introductory words to another myth, "The Distribution
 /541/ of the Clan Districts" (p. 170): Mareiwa "then told
 the birds they were Indians" /translated from the Spanish/.
 Such words make it clear: the myth knows no distinction be-
 tween totem animal and Indian in their mode of being and
 acting! Therefore one does not get anywhere in the analysis
 of myths with a knife-sharp dialectic lacking any imagination.
 614 Thus, I may indeed, along with the reporters from former
 times up to our day, regard the social division of the Guajiro
 people as properly totemistic in style. Two years ago (1959),

C /193 cont. /

534 Finally, it remains to be discovered whether a people
171 neighboring the Busintana is familiar with the musical bow. I
have already said that this was not the case among the rest of
the Arhuaco.

G
534 Among the Goajiro Indians, along with the "trompa," a
musical bow with horsehair string is used. One end of the bow
is put in the mouth, and a narrow, uneven stick is drawn over
G
[177] the string. The strange material of the string already /194/
points to late influence; there are various African traits in the
Goajiro culture, as I shall try to show in a future monograph.

G
[852] Moreover, the musical bow here is small, poorly made, and is
[171] used mostly by boys. Among the Motilon Indians on the Maraca,
too, boys play it (see below /untranslated/). Here one must
534 likewise assume that the Indians learned how to use it only in
177 post-Columbian times, probably from the mulattoes living in the
flat country.

C
411 As far as the Chimila are concerned, De Brettes says that
184 he saw hanging at the entrance of a hut a small bow 30 centi-
[114] meters long, with accompanying arrows. He does not know what
this is used for (192). I myself, during my brief visit among these
[553]
[101]

192 /from p. 257 of the foreign text/. De
Brettes, p. 462.

C
[553] Indians, did not see such a bow, but they told me that in connec-
tion with the naming of boys they use a bow decorated with
feathers. Among the Ijca, the "sponsor" presents the little child
with a tiny bow of palm wood. Naturally, this is no more in-
C
796 tended as a musical instrument than the Chimila bow. Since the
411 bow was already used in former times at religious ceremonies, which
534 is not uncommon in South America, one can at least imagine that
174 a musical bow, which even in size comes close to the symbolic
bow, might easily find some use at these. The ceremonial must
be observed, one must not forget anything, but an addition is
easily achieved. The argument of Lumholtz is therefore not
conclusive, as I have noted earlier. An instrument named marimba